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ABSTRACT

ASSESSING CHANGES IN BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF CHRISTLIKE LIVING AT THE SOUTHWEST CAMPUS OF THE DARBY CREEK CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

by

Steven Charles Suttles, Sr.

The Church of the Nazarene faces many challenges in the twenty-first century, as all denominations do at this time. One of the key challenges revolves around the issues of clarity regarding the denomination's core doctrine, entire sanctification. Confusion over this key doctrine began to surface in the early 1960s with new literature reflecting more of a Wesleyan trajectory than the American holiness emphasis that set the tone of preaching on this doctrine up until that time. Today, a disagreement exists in the denomination among those who prefer an American holiness approach regarding this key doctrine and those who emphasize a Wesleyan one. The disagreement creates confusion over this core doctrine for preachers and members of the Nazarene denomination. Preachers in the denomination need a balanced theology of love that will provide a basis for clear, empowered preaching on the nature and practice of Christlike living for the twenty-first century.

The purpose of the research was to provide one means for evaluating changes in beliefs and practices of Christlike living in the twenty-first century for members and attendees at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene through the means of a sermon series presented over a period of six weeks. Two researcher-designed tools, the Preseries Questionnaire and Discerning Changes Questionnaire analyzed changes in beliefs and practices

because of a six-week sermon series entitled, God's Grand Design for Your Life. The tools were identical, allowing the opportunity to gauge any changes before and after the sermon series. Additionally, a focus group met each week to discuss the sermons right after the worship service. The focus group provided the opportunity for deeper probing regarding any changes in Christlike beliefs and practices that occurred because of the sermons. As a secondary benefit, the group also provided an opportunity to discuss what elements of the sermons helped facilitate those changes, if any.

The Preseries Questionnaire and Discerning Changes Questionnaire indicated little change regarding beliefs and practices about Christlikeness. However, changes in practices did occur. The focus group demonstrated more change in the area of beliefs. This group was also helpful discerning critical elements of effective preaching.

DISSERTATION APPROVAL

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled

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AT THE SOUTHWEST CAMPUS OF THE DARBY CREEK CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

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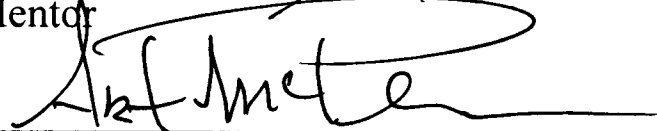
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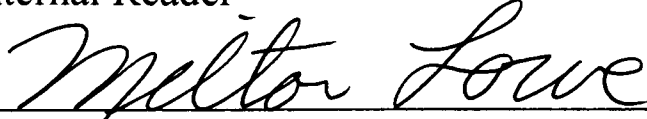
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**ASSESSING CHANGES IN BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF CHRISTLIKE
LIVING AT THE SOUTHWEST CAMPUS OF THE DARBY CREEK CHURCH
OF THE NAZARENE**

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of
Asbury Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by

Steen Charles Suttles, Sr.

May 2015

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Steven Charles Suttles, Sr.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM

Introduction

Barbara Brown Taylor says, “Watching a preacher climb into the pulpit is a lot like watching a tightrope walker climb onto the platform as the drum roll begins” (qtd. in Lischer, *Compamy* 47). This statement has always been true but even more so in the twenty-first century. Despite much confusion over the role of the pastor, Jesus left a clear mission for pastors right before he left earth. He told all the disciples to “go and make disciples of all nations...” (Matt. 28:19, NIV). The simplicity of the mission, however, breaks down very quickly for pastors and churches. The world has changed dramatically. Pastors, let alone Christians, struggle with the meaning of being a disciple or follower of Christ in the twenty-first century. The confusion even extends to the pulpits in America. Pastors today need to articulate a clear message of Christlikeness for the people they shepherd and lead.

Research confirms the need for help in the area of preaching that leads to transformative life change. LifeWay Research says, “Of all the reasons churchgoers choose to leave their previous church, the number one specific reason is because the church was not helping me to develop spiritually” (“LifeWay Research”). Furthermore, Gallup asks people the question, “What is the most important reason why you attend a church or synagogue?” (“Just Why Do Americans”) The largest group, totaling twenty—three percent, responded that they attend for spiritual growth and guidance.” (“Just Why Do Americans”) Neither clarity of mission nor a lack of desire among Christians is the

problem. Mainly, the issue is that pastors need guidance on how best to help people grow in Christlikeness.

The research for this project occurred in the context of the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene. The Nazarene denomination is Wesleyan-Arminian in theology. Born out of the American holiness movement in the late nineteenth century, Nazarenes believe spreading the message of scriptural holiness is an essential aspect of their mission. For Nazarenes, and many others, the call to make disciples involves going beyond just asking people to make decisions for Christ but also helping them become Christlike disciples. In the Nazarene denomination, however, many divergent voices threaten this core message. Nazarenes concerned about the emergent church form one of those voices. Nazarenes who are embracing the emergent church model are another voice. Some have opted for the generic community church model instead of the more traditional Nazarene denominational model.

Many believe trying to replicate the past is the answer. The Nazarene denomination formed with the impetus and mandate to spread scriptural holiness or to make Christlike disciples. This unifying mission lost strength in the midst of the turbulent changes of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Clarifying the message and renewing the commitment to make Christlike disciples in the nations is critical for Nazarenes in the twenty-first century.

Therefore, Nazarenes must find ways to articulate the message of scriptural holiness, or Christlikeness, in this generation. They must find words and terms that connect with a new generation without losing the content of the theology in the process. Pastors and leaders of the denomination must learn to delineate what is scripturally

essential from what is only historically important. Nazarenes must learn to articulate a full-orbed, scripturally faithful, integrated Wesleyan-Arminian message of holiness in the American holiness stream for twenty-first century Christ followers and non-Christ followers. As Paul says, if the trumpet does not give a clear call, people will not know in what direction to go (1 Cor. 14:8). The original mandate that unified and motivated Nazarenes to spread across the earth must take priority again in order for Nazarenes to reassume their vital role as leaders in the holiness movement in the twenty-first century.

Purpose

The purpose of the research was to provide one means for evaluating changes in beliefs and practices of Christlike living in the twenty-first century for members and attendees at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene through the means of a sermon series presented over a period of six weeks. Once I observed changes that occurred using the Pre-Series Questionnaire (PSQ) and Discerning Changes Questionnaire (DCQ), I was able to evaluate preaching practices that helped facilitate the changes through the Discerning Best Practices Focus Group (DBPFG). This aspect was not the main purpose of this research but did serve as a secondary benefit of the project.

Research Questions

The research questions enabled me to discern changes in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living as the result of a six-part sermon series I preached at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene entitled, God's Grand Design for Your Life. I handed out the identical PSQ and DCQ instruments before and after the series to gauge changes that occurred during the sermon series. During the sermon series, I conducted a focus group composed of seven people after each message

of the series for discerning what changes they experienced because of the sermon, and as by-product I asked questions to discern if any of the elements of the preaching were instrumental in facilitating those changes.

Research Question #1

What were the beliefs and practices of the group regarding Christlike living prior to the sermon series?

Research Question #2

What changes occurred in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living in the group subsequent to the sermon series?

Research Question #3

What elements of the sermon design and delivery contributed to the changes in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living in the twenty-first century?

Definition of Terms

All projects require clarity and focus to ensure success. The following definitions provided the parameters necessary to make sure the project stayed on target. For example, in this project, Christlikeness needed clarification to prevent confusion. Nazarenes emphasize Christlikeness as an essential hallmark of holy living. Nazarenes cannot claim the goal of Christlikeness exclusively, but they articulate this lifestyle within the framework of what others in the *holiness* tradition mean when they speak of salvation. The Bible and systematic theology come together on the issue of the crisis of entire sanctification and cleansing of the sinful nature. Paul, addressing people who were already Christians says, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your

true and proper worship” (Rom. 12:1). Paul calls Christians to “offer your bodies a living sacrifice...” after they have already been born again. Romans 6:13 employs very similar language as Romans 12:1. Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” I agree with the hermeneutical approach of Middendorf on this verse as outlined in Chapter 2. I do not believe the only way to interpret this verse is as a text for entire sanctification. However, I do believe the Greek use of the aorist in this verse, in line with the experience of believers and tradition reaching back into the time of the early Church fathers, warrants this interpretation as one possible meaning of this verse.

Beliefs

Beliefs form the foundation for Christian living. In this project, I used this word to describe the knowledge and level of agreement the participants held concerning Christlikeness. Monitoring these changes in belief was critical, since changes in belief ultimately result in changes in practice.

Practices

For the purpose of this project, *practices* are the actual behaviors that facilitate or result from Christlike beliefs. Specifically, some may call these practices *spiritual disciplines* that foster Christlike living and behaviors that can reflect this lifestyle. Ultimately, change should produce growth in the area of Christian practices that foster and flow out of Christlike beliefs.

Christlikeness

Christlikeness is used in this research project to describe what Nazarenes generally use to refer to as *holiness living*. In Nazarene circles, *holiness* is a descriptive word encompassing the second work of grace known as entire sanctification and the subsequent lifestyle of holy living. *Christlikeness* is synonymous with *holiness* in this project.

Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene

Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene is the new name for the multi-site work formerly existing as three churches: Southwest Community Church of the Nazarene, Darbydale Church of the Nazarene, and Countryside Church of the Nazarene, located in Darbyville, Ohio. These churches became one church in three campuses known as Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene officially at the 2012 South Central Ohio Church of the Nazarene District Assembly. Southwest is the lead campus. Darbydale Church of the Nazarene became the Darbydale campus and Countryside Church of the Nazarene became the Darbyville campus.

Southwest Campus

The Southwest campus is the lead campus in the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene multi-campus church. The Southwest campus was the site for the research. Southwest served as the research site because this campus had the most possible respondents and was the one that I, as lead pastor, had the most experience serving.

Ministry Project

The desire to help people move toward *Christlikeness* inspired this research project. Obviously, preaching is one of the main opportunities a pastor has in aiding

fellow disciples in their discipleship journey. My desire was to learn ways to be more effective in developing Christlike disciples through the means of preaching.

The research included two researcher-designed instruments called the PSQ and DCQ (See Appendixes B and C). The PSQ assessed beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living before I preached the sermon series, God's Grand Design For Your Life. I administered the PSQ following a worship service at the Southwest campus two weeks before the beginning of the sermon series. Many people graciously stayed after the services to complete the questionnaire.

The DCQ was used to measure growth in beliefs and practices after I completed the sermon series. This questionnaire had the same questions as the first instrument and gave me the opportunity to gauge changes that occurred in beliefs and practices of Christlike living after the series was over. I administered this instrument over a two-week period to guarantee that I received a maximum number of responses.

A focus group consisting of a wide cross section of people from the Southwest campus met to discuss each sermon over lunch each week of the series. The goal of the focus group meetings was to help discern changes that occurred in beliefs and practices of Christlike living because of the sermon series, as well as, what elements of the preaching helped foster those changes. I conducted the focus group following each sermon in order to receive fresh information from the participants.

The primary goal of the project was to discern the changes that occurred in beliefs and practices of Christlike living through the means of a six-week sermon series. However, the third research question provided the opportunity to explore best preaching practices as a secondary focus. The focus group meetings held after the individual

sermons gave me the opportunity to learn what parts of the sermon and preaching process were helpful in attaining fresh data about any changes that occurred and what facilitated those changes..

Context

As a Nazarene, one of the possible uses of this research is to serve as a resource for discussion among leaders at the general level of the Church of the Nazarene. The General Church of the Nazarene encompasses the general superintendents, colleges, missionary enterprises, and other worldwide leadership boards and committees. Additionally, an aim was for professors in Nazarene colleges or Wesleyan-Arminian schools to use this research as supplemental material for classes on preaching. Last, I would like to use this material for training of pastors in some educational outlet within the Church of the Nazarene.

A second area of focus for the research was the South Central Ohio District Church of the Nazarene. As a district with many different cultural expressions, having some transferrable principles for communicating Wesleyan-Arminian beliefs and practices could be very helpful at this time. The district hosts a culturally diverse population in the Columbus, Ohio area. Additionally, the district encompasses a heavily Appalachian population in southern Ohio. While every context has unique challenges, transferrable principles are applicable for many different contexts. Therefore, District Superintendent Trevor Johnston of the South Central Ohio District Church of the Nazarene received the results of the project, so he could evaluate how the research gathered might benefit the district.

One other intent for the application of the results of this study was for the other campuses of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene. Since all three campus pastors preach on the same theme and Scripture portion each week, the project had ready implications for these other campuses as well. All three campuses are within a ten-mile radius, so the contextual issues are not very limiting for these campuses. Though specific in focus, the possible applications spilled over into many different venues.

The Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene served as the primary site for this study because it contains the largest cross section and population of people for the research purposes among the three campuses. This campus, originally known as Southwest Community Church of the Nazarene, officially organized in July 1970 in what was then the Central Ohio District Church of the Nazarene. This church became the lead campus for Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene officially in April 2012 at the South Central District Church of the Nazarene. The church entered a period of decline in the early 1990s that did not start to reverse until 2008. From this point forward, the church grew from 73-146 through the 2012 church year. However, Southwest was situated between two churches—Darbydale Church of the Nazarene and Darbyville Church of the Nazarene, which were about to close. All three of these churches are now functioning as one church on three campuses in three locations. The research aided in discerning best practices for making Christlike followers of Jesus through the preaching ministry at the Southwest campus Church of the Nazarene.

Methodology

The methodology used for the project was an explanatory, mixed methodology. The quantitative data gained from the PSQ and DCQ gave me the opportunity to discern

changes in Christlike beliefs and practices during the sermon series. This goal was the primary focus of the project. However, by incorporating qualitative data from focus groups, I was able to gain information about what helped facilitate the changes. My primary goal was to effect and measure change in the lives of those attending the sermon series. However, by using a mixed methodology, I hoped to learn which preaching practices influenced the life change.

I developed three instruments for the project. Two of the instruments are questionnaires (PSQ and DCQ) that respondents filled out before and after the sermon series intervention. The results of these questionnaires highlighted the changes that occurred in beliefs and practices because of the sermon series.

The third instrument was the DBPFG (see Appendix D). After each sermon, seven people agreed to meet and discuss the sermons each week over lunch after the worship service at the Southwest campus. I employed a semi-structured interview process with the participants, allowing me to follow their discussion while offering the needed guidance to keep the discussion headed into the right direction. This process allowed for the opportunity to collect quantitative analysis about what changes occurred and, as a secondary benefit, provided data about preaching practices that aided in those changes. I also allowed participants in the focus groups to give input on my data collection to ensure data reliability. By completing the focus groups as I preached the series, the data collection process itself only required two months. I needed another two months to record and analyze the data gathered from the quantitative and qualitative instruments.

Participants

The project involved two groups of participants. The first group included all attendees of the Southwest campus 16 years of age and older who attend worship service at least once a month. All these *attenders* at the Southwest campus received the opportunity to participate in the PSQ and DCQ. The second group involved a focus group of seven people from varying backgrounds including age, gender, and spiritual maturity. They participated in a focus group with me following each sermon over a lunch that I provided. I needed people who would exemplify honesty, conscientiousness, punctuality, and confidentiality about what occurred in the groups. Therefore, I opted for a semi-purposeful selection of participants to help enhance the possibility that those involved would yield the most information on best practices for preaching on Christlike living. The choice of quality participants was a key factor in obtaining valid and reliable data collection for this study.

Instrumentation

I utilized three researcher-designed tools for this study. The PSQ and DCQ (see Appendixes B and C) were the researcher-designed questionnaires aimed at assessing pre- and postintervention awareness and changes regarding Christlike beliefs and practices in the participants. For this purpose, both tools were identical. The *beliefs* scale moved from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The *practices* scale moved from never (1) to always (4). The aim for these styles of questions was to elicit data that would produce clear-cut results for further quantitative analysis. The faculty mentor for this project, the proposal team, and a psychologist with expertise in statistics helped validate the measurement instruments.

The discerning best practices focus group protocol was the third data collection instrument used. This instrument was also researcher-designed for this specific study. This instrument provided qualitative measurements to help discern what occurred in the sermon series that produced the changes in the participants regarding their beliefs and practices in relation to Christlike living.

Variables

The independent variable of this explanatory mixed method was the six-week sermon series intervention. The dependent variable was the specific changes in beliefs and practices that occurred in the participants because of the sermon series. The DBPFG assisted in discerning the changes that occurred and causes of those changes.

Several intervening variables were possible. First, I did not know how many people would fill out or return the questionnaire. Secondly, I had people give their names on the instruments, so I could measure changes later. Obviously, participants may have felt pressured to answer the questions in ways that cast them in a more favorable light. The congregation received encouragement to be completely truthful along with the promise of confidentiality in hope of lessening the possibilities of this negative variable.

Another similar possible intervening variable revolved around getting honest answers in the focus groups. People have a tendency to tell pastors what they want to hear. Training someone to lead the participants was one way to avoid this possibility. However, personally leading the focus groups seemed to be the best way to ensure gaining accurate, firsthand information. Research on best practices for conducting focus groups alleviated some of these intervening variables. A strong attempt to pick quality

participants was another response to this possible intervening variable. Participants also received absolute permission to be completely honest.

Another variable was uncontrollable. Very few people attend church every week anymore. Obviously, this variable had an impact on the data collection. One solution for this problem was the church Web site. The congregation was encouraged to take advantage of the messages recorded on the Web site if they had to miss a service. These steps coupled with the qualitative DBPFG were mitigating factors employed in an effort to lessen the impact of this variable. Attendance during the sermon series was a factor in selecting people for the focus groups. Each person selected was aware of the critical importance of attending each session.

Data Collection

The process for data collection required two months to complete. First, four weeks in advance, I made the congregation aware of the upcoming sermon series entitled, *God's Grand Design for Your Life*. At this time, the congregation received a strong appeal to attend all six weeks of the series and discover God's grand design for their lives.

They also received information about the PSQ and DCQ. I explained how these tools would enable me to discern the changes in Christlike beliefs and practices. The participants received encouragement to be honest in completing the questionnaires. I assured them of the confidentiality of all their responses in an attempt to elicit accurate data. Lastly, I informed all the participants that the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene Leadership Team approved this project.

Video announcements of the sermon started this week as well. The church Web site also started highlighting the upcoming series that week. The sermons were available on the church Web site to allow people who could not attend every service to listen to the sermons and participate in the DCQ.

Next, two weeks prior to the beginning of the series, the congregation had the opportunity to complete the PSQ while at the worship service. Congregants received detailed instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. The instrument was broken into two sections. The first section assessed beliefs regarding Christlikeness on a scale of one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree) prior to the sermon series. The second section measured current practices of Christlike living on a scale of one (never) to four (always). Using this instrument, I was able to assess current levels of activity regarding spiritual disciplines and behaviors going into the series.

Two weeks following the sending of the PSQ, the six-week sermon series commenced. E-mails and social media reminded the congregation of the upcoming series. Two days before the series began, the church phone system reminded the congregation of the upcoming series.

Following the last message in the series, I allowed the attenders present to fill out the DCQ during the morning service. This instrument was identical in form and questions with the first instrument. The questions on these instruments allowed me the opportunity to measure changes in beliefs and practices of Christlike living that occurred because of the sermon. I also administered the DCQ over a two-week period in an attempt to get as much data as possible.

During the sermon series, I conducted a focus group over lunch following each sermon in the series. Factors such as age, gender, integrity, level of involvement in the sermon series, and varying spiritual maturity influenced the selection of focus group members. The qualitative data gathered from these participants provided the information necessary for discerning changes at a deeper level as well as allowing for data on elements of the preaching that facilitated any changes that occurred during the series.

The focus groups lasted 1½ hours per meeting. I guided the participants through a semi-structured group discussion process, leaving plenty of room for the participants to take the discussion in a direction that would provide quality data (see Appendix D). I made the decision to lead the group, so I could make sure that I received the kind of data for which I was looking. However, group members also received special counsel to give information with absolute candor and honesty. In addition, throughout the whole process, the participants received the certainty of absolute confidentiality.

A digital recorder helped to ensure the quality of data collection. Copious notes recorded during the meeting provided additional information. I also enlisted the help of an assistant who took notes in addition to my own. After each meeting, I transcribed the recorded discussion. This data was critical for discerning changes and causes of change.

Data Analysis

In order to attain quality data for analysis, the PSQ assessed beliefs and practices regarding Christlikeness prior to the sermon series intervention. A straightforward strongly disagree and strongly agree survey, ranging from one through five, respectively, provided clear, concrete data from the beliefs section of the PSQ for the purpose of analysis. On the second section, I used a one through four scale, ranging from never to

always to ascertain current levels of Christlike practices among the participants at the Southwest campus. The DCQ measured the same issues after the sermon series with the same scales.

The DBPFG data analysis involved several readings of the data collected in the focus group interviews. First, an initial scan of the transcribed data yielded general familiarity with the material. A second, more thorough reading produced an idea of some general themes. The next reading solidified and narrowed those themes, and some patterns developed. Several other readings facilitated coding and placing the rest of the material into categories. These themes and patterns served in the discovery of major and unsuspected findings regarding any changes and causes of change.

Generalizability

This project had limited transferability from the beginning. Obviously, this study applied best to Nazarenes. More specifically, it applied to the Nazarenes at the Southwest campus for the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene. The study did have some applicability for the South Central District Church of the Nazarene, but certainly the unique cultural expressions of the area did limit transferability. At the general level, many have contributed to this issue, so this study was one more voice in a growing set of voices on this subject

The study did seek to give a unique perspective, however, on how to apply Wesleyan-Arminian teachings on Christlikeness to Nazarenes in the twenty-first century. Additionally, the research did offer theological grounding for having a discussion between the varying voices on this subject. As well, this project offered some transferrable principles that could be useful to pastors willing to take the time to study the

results and apply them to their context. While the research provided in-depth research on Wesleyan-Arminian theology with a practical focus in preaching, it may also be beneficial to theology professors. The limitations helped provide a lens that could help pastors, professors, and church leaders navigate these times of transformative changes with a finely tuned theological compass.

Biblical and Theological Foundations

All pastoral work requires a strong biblical and theological foundation. For this study, a solid biblical theology of holiness and preaching is essential. The following research will serve as that foundation for this project.

A Biblical Theology of Holiness

The theological bedrock for this project is the doctrine of Christian holiness. Peter says in 1 Peter 1:15-16, “But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written, ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’” This call stretches all the way back through Exodus 19:6 when God called Israel to be his own holy nation, separated out from the rest of the world. Peter is also clearly quoting Leviticus 19:2, where God commanded his people, “Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.” God’s people must heed the call to reflect his nature, and this call extends to every aspect of life. Kenneth A. Matthews comments on this passage: “Christianity does more than prepare us for the ‘sweet by and by.’ The extensive listing of exhortations to holy living in Leviticus 19 touches every aspect of life and life’s decisions” (168). From the very beginning of the formation of the people of God, holiness is the standard.

This truth highlights a key distinction regarding the holiness of God and human beings. Humans can only be holy based on a relationship with the holy God. W. T.

Purkiser says, “God alone is holy in himself” (19). Later on, he says, “In summary, it is fair to say that biblically defined, holiness is close to describing the nature of God. It is the ‘sum of the attributes,’ the essence of Deity, the godness of God” (27). Only God is inherently holy. Therefore, the only way for humans to experience holiness is in relationship with God. Purkiser says, “All other holiness (outside of God) is derived from a relationship with him” (19). Holiness, then, is a relational term, for humans can only be holy in a dependent sense through relationship with God.

The Hebrew word for holy is rich in meaning and origin. However, tracing the word’s semantic origins is difficult. Some postulate the theory that the word has Babylonian roots because of its similarity in form with a Babylonian word meaning “bright” or “clear” (Greathouse 12). The other theory conjectures that the root means “to be separated” (Greathouse, 12). Norman Snaith is in favor of the latter interpretation: “With respect to the comparative merits of the two suggestions, the balance, in our view, is definitely in favor of Baudissin’s theory (*qodesh*) which had originally to do with ‘separation’” (25). As God is separate from the unholy and profane, his people are to be separate as well.

Qodesh is a key word in the Old Testament, with over 830 occurrences of this word. The verb *to sanctify*, the noun *holiness*, and the adjective *holy* are from the same root for this word (Turner 16). As has been noted, the word *holy* is a relational term, but the word is also strictly a religious term. George Allen Turner says, “The term has never been found except in a religious context; no secular usage is known” (16). The word *holy* is clearly a word that has to do with God and his attempt at relationship with humanity.

William Greathouse believes the word passed through three phases in the Old Testament according (12). The first phase emphasized the otherness of God. Moses' burning bush experience illustrates this aspect of God's holiness. God's presence made the very ground surrounding the burning bush holy so that Moses has to remove his shoes in the presence of God. In Exodus 19:12, the children of Israel received very strict instructions about not getting near Mt. Sinai when God descended on the mountain. God told Moses, "Put limits for the people around the mountain and tell them, 'Be careful that you do not go up the mountain or touch the foot of it.' Whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death." This aspect of God's holiness emphasizes the awe and wonder surrounding the God of Israel. Rudolph Otto emphasizes this conception of holiness. He coins the term *numinous* from the Latin *numen* or *supernatural* to highlight this nuance of the word. The numinous is a *moment*, an awareness beyond rational analysis. Otto says, "The 'holy' evokes awe—it overwhelms with a sense of majesty; it pulsates with supernatural power" (5). *Numinous* describes the transcendent holiness of God.

Though the *numinous* concept is definitely a key aspect regarding holiness in the Old Testament, the word carries other connotations as well. Again, Leviticus 19 becomes critical for a comprehensive understanding of holiness. According to Walter Kaiser, Otto makes ethical content a "mere extra" in the concept of holiness (1132). Leviticus 19 insists that faith and ethics always belong together, though they are by no means identical (1132). John Gammie also offers a critique regarding Otto's overemphasis on the *numinous* aspect of holiness:

Nowhere does Otto sufficiently probe the notion that the word "holy" calls for purity, cleanness, and that frequently purity is to be attained by

separation. To be holy is to be separate; to be holy is to be clean and pure. Each of these notions has ethical as well as cultic implications. (6-7)

Gammie demonstrates clearly that the word *holy* carries many nuances. From the beginning, ethical issues were included in the Hebrew idea of holiness. However, this rich *quodesh* word family has an even deeper layer of meaning.

The cultic element represented the second phase of the use of the *quodesh* terminology. This cultic element is almost completely used in a derivative way, meaning the *holiness* of persons, places, and objects are the direct result of their being consecrated to the service or ownership of God, who is the primary bearer of holiness in a nonderivative sense (Greathouse 15). In this phase, sanctification is the ritual that makes someone or something holy; thus, “to sanctify” means “to make holy” (15). Exodus 19:10-12 serves as an example of this idea:

And the LORD said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow. Have them wash their clothes and be ready by the third day, because on that day the LORD will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. Put limits for the people around the mountain and tell them, Be careful that you do not approach the mountain or touch the foot of it. Whoever touches the mountain is to be put to death.”

The people received a prescribed method of consecration to prepare them for the majestic presence of God .

According to Greathouse, “The third and most distinctive phase of the use of the *quodesh* family of terms came chiefly into view with the work of the eighth-century prophets. Hence, it is sometimes called ‘the prophetic view’” (15). At this time, the ethical element becomes the key aspect of holiness. The prophets laid the Old Testament foundation for a theology of holiness in the New Testament that enables humans to be “holy as God is holy” (1 Pet. 1:16) through a relationship with Jesus that transforms a

person from the inside out and issues in a life of love for others. In this way, the prophets served as a bridge, helping prepare God's people for a deeper level of holiness introduced by Jesus in the New Testament.

Holiness in the New Testament brings together all three aspects of holiness in the Old Testament. New Testament holiness is also a derivative holiness in that humans only become holy in a relationship with God the Father, through his Son, by the power of the Holy Spirit now living in the follower of Jesus. The transcendent God makes himself immanent through the Incarnation, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Speaking of his resurrection, Jesus said to his disciples, "On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you" (John 14:20). Leon Morris says the resurrection gives the apostles certainty regarding the teachers and promises of Jesus:

This certainty is expressed not in terms of the greatness of Christ, nor of the rightness of their position or the like. Rather it concerns the indwelling Christ in God and mutual indwelling of Christ in believers. When He is risen and when the Spirit is come, then they will know the truth of His relationship to the Father, and they will know that He dwells in them and they in Him. (652)

Jesus embraced the mystery of Trinity in John 14:16-18, telling the disciples that the *Paraclete* would come to live in them. The Trinity will inhabit humans. This concept is central for holiness theology and preaching because all holiness is derivative and relational through saving faith in Jesus and the consequent indwelling of the Holy Spirit. New Christians, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, are now able to live in relationship with God and grow in Christlikeness through a life of continued dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Paul fleshes out a Christology that fosters Christlike living in his epistles. In Ephesians 1:13-14 Paul writes with passion and beauty regarding God's great plan of salvation for all believers:

And you were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

The moment a person puts his or her faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to indwell that person. In that instant, the believer becomes a brand new person in Christ. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" Ralph P. Martin powerfully enunciates the nature of this new reality:

[Those who are] in Christ ... inhabit a new world. A new eon has been inaugurated by the cross and resurrection of Jesus, and Paul sees the whole of life through fresh eyes because of the new order of creation that has arrived at the "turning point of the ages." (132)

Jesus instituted the new eon, through his death, burial, and resurrection. When he ascended into heaven, he poured out his Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, keeping his promise in John 14:16-18 to indwell his people.

The whole cultic aspect of holiness was transformed at this point because, as Paul says, the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of Jesus, lives in every believer, making each believer a "temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 6:19). From this point forward, Christians began the process of sanctification or becoming more like Christ. Paul writes powerfully about this process of sanctification in 2 Corinthians 3:17-18:

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit works to make the believer just like Jesus. Leviticus 19 hints that this process of sanctification will touch every aspect of life but will be the result of the Holy

Spirit's work within the believer and the believer's cooperation with the Holy Spirit. This aspect of sanctification is progressive and receives widespread support in Christian theology.

At this point, an understanding of the New Testament words for *holiness* and *sanctification* will shed light not only on the substance of holiness but also on the process of sanctification whereby believers become holy. The *hagiosune* word family of the New Testament encompasses the *quodesh* terms of the Old Testament. The word *hagios* is the root word for holiness in the Greek and is translated *saint* sixty-one times in the New Testament (Turner 114). *Hagios*, like *quodesh*, primarily signifies separation (Greathouse 198). In the New Testament, however, all believers and not just priests bear this designation. In Ephesians 1:4, *hagios* and *amomos* come together in Christ. The word *amomos* describes an unblemished sacrificial victim (Lev. 22:21). This word is used of Christ twice in Hebrews 9:14 and 1 Peter 1:19 and of Christians in six other instances. These applications of the *hagios* word family joined in connection with *anomos* clearly portray the merging of Old Testament ideas, linking the cultic and the ethical elements of holiness (115). All believers in Christ can now become holy and blameless as Christ was through vital union with him in his death, burial, and resurrection in lifestyle as well as their position in Christ.

Hagiosune and *hagiotēs* are translated *holiness* in the New Testament. These words describe the moral purity and godlikeness of the saints. Technically speaking, *hagiosune* refers to the quality of holiness. The Apostle Paul uses the word twice of believers in 2 Corinthians 7:1 and 1 Thessalonians 3:13. *Hagiosune* occurs first in 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1. Second Corinthians 7:1 is worthy of exegesis at this point. Paul

writes to the Corinthian believers, “Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.” Paul exhorts the Corinthian believers to perfect their holiness out of reverence for Christ. The text implies a process of sanctification whereby the believer becomes more like Christ.

However, *hagiadzein* and *hagismos* are of special significance in understanding New Testament holiness. The words mean *sanctify* and *sanctification*, respectively. Greathouse says, “*Hagisamos* is by far the most important term for understanding the nature of New Testament sanctification” (202). The epistles employ this word ten times and are almost universally translated *sanctification*. William Barclay says, “Greek nouns which end in *-asmos* commonly describe a process, and *hagiasmos* is a process by which we become *hagios*. *Hagiasmos* is therefore the road to holiness. Sanctification is more an ongoing process than its final state” (307). In the New Testament, sanctification takes on the meaning of becoming more like Christ. God works through the Holy Spirit to make believers into the image of Jesus.

Hagiadzein means literally, “to make holy” (Greathouse 202). The *-adzein* suffix was as active as the modern *-fy* suffix in producing new words for the New Testament Greek language (Moulton and Milligan 202). Joseph Henry Thayer says that *hagiadzein* means (1) to hallow, (2) to separate from things profane and dedicate to God, or; (3) to purify (qtd. in Greathouse 6). This word conveys the idea of *holifying* and *holy—making* (Greathouse 202). Both *hagiasmos* and *hagiadzein* carry the idea of making followers of Christ holy through ongoing connection with him. The Old Testament *numinous* concept, along with the cultic and ethical connotations, come together as believers are brought into

relationship with the holy God through faith in Christ. At this point, the Holy Spirit indwells the believers (Eph.1:13-14), beginning the wonderful process of sanctification. This glorious process will continue until the believer sees Jesus in heaven and will be “like him, because we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2). At this point, sanctification reaches its intended goal.

The letters of John also open a window on the nature and substance of sanctification in the New Testament. First John 2:19 indicates an environment of conflict in the churches that John addresses in this letter. Gary M. Burge argues that the church to which the apostle John is writing has undergone a nasty split over doctrinal issues related to the personhood of Jesus and personal ethics (24-25). In 1 John 2:26, John hints that some of those who had left are trying to lure others to come with them. John calls these false teachers “antichrists” 1 John 2:26.

He does not stop by simply highlighting the false teaching. Positively, he says, “Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did” (1 John 2:6). In verses 9-10, he clearly teaches that love is the hallmark of Christlikeness. Those who claim to live in Christ and cause division are liars because they are full of hate instead of love. In 1 John 4:17-21 John calls the believers in Asia to live a life of perfect love. Believers are to receive God’s love and share that love with other believers and unbelievers in the same way God loves them. The apostle John paints a picture of Christlikeness in bright colors that accents the love of Christ flowing through believers in the everyday relationships of life.

Christians of all backgrounds believe in a doctrine of sanctification. The Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification is another matter. Really though, all Christians

believe in entire sanctification, as well. How and when entire sanctification occurs is another matter of debate.

The Wesleyan and American holiness movements of the past, however, place a great deal of emphasis on the idea of a crisis work of entire sanctification subsequent to regeneration in this lifetime. Mildred Bangs Wynkoop's concept of the substance and circumstance of sanctification helps clarify what the Bible clearly teaches, and experience verifies on the subject of entire sanctification. She writes, "When he [Wesley] discussed the subject of holiness he carefully distinguished between what he called the *substance* and the *circumstance* of holiness. Substance referred to the content of truth; circumstance, the means" (original emphasis 303). John Wesley only uses Scripture to define the substance of holiness. John Wesley's favorite way of defining the substance of holiness is to quote the Great Commandment. On Monday, 25 June 1744, at a conference where six clergymen and all the preachers were present, the doctrine of sanctification or perfection was "seriously considered" (*Works* 9: 387. Asked, "What is it to be sanctified?" he replies, "To be renewed in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness" (387). He stays consistent with this definition throughout his entire ministry. In sermon after sermon, and writing after writing, he expresses what this life looks like as love for God and neighbor. In his sermon *On Charity* he articulates the way of love with his characteristic string of biblical words and phrases:

The sum of all that has been observed is this: Whatever I speak, whatever I know, whatever I believe, whatever I do, whatever I suffer; if I have not the faith that worketh by love, that produces love to God and all mankind, I am not in the narrow way which leadeth to life, but in the broad road that leadeth to destruction. (7: 56)

For Wesley, the substance of sanctification, holiness, or Christlikeness is living out the Great Commandment in the power of the Holy Spirit, while the circumstance refers to the means of sanctification. On this issue, Wesley and the American holiness movement leaders approach this subject from the same vantage point. However, while Wesley clearly teaches a crisis moment of entire sanctification, he does not use Scripture as the basis for this doctrine, as the leaders of the American holiness movement do. Wesley relied on experience for proof of entire sanctification, while American holiness preachers, *proof-texted* the circumstance of entire sanctification in texts of Scripture. This practice is one of the several factors that would later create confusion among Nazarenes in the twentieth century regarding their core doctrine.

Today, in the Nazarene denomination, two camps exist regarding the doctrine of entire sanctification. One seems to fall either in the American holiness camp or in the Wesleyan camp regarding the doctrine. The confusion, therefore, lies not only among Christians but also in the ranks of Nazarenes themselves. For this reason, Wesleyan-Arminian, Nazarene pastoral leaders of the twenty-first century need to develop a clear, coherent message of holiness that takes seriously Scripture, experience, tradition, and intelligent thinking while continuing to swim in the Wesleyan, American holiness stream of theology. While the pulpit is not the only place for this practice to occur, Nazarene preachers are going to have to sound a clear trumpet call if this core doctrine and message of life transformation will continue to guide the denomination forward in these times of radical change as this message did in the formative years of the denomination. The early preachers of the Nazarene denomination held a firm belief in the life-changing power of

the preaching of the gospel, and this belief will guide Nazarene leaders and preachers in the twenty-first century.

A Biblical Theology of Preaching

The New Testament, and especially the apostle Paul, stress the power of preaching the gospel. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 1:18, “For the message of the gospel is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” In Romans 10:14 he writes, “How then, can they call on one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them.” Paul also writes, “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.” (Rom. 1:16) The Spirit-inspired and empowered preaching of the gospel is still God’s way of saving and transforming people into the likeness of Christ. Therefore, belief in the relevance and power of preaching is tantamount for effectiveness in preaching.

Wesley believed his calling was to preach scripture holiness to reach the people of his generation. He preached in fields or wherever else he could to offer the people of his day the gospel of the life-transforming grace and power of Jesus Christ. He formed societies, classes, and bands to provide ongoing support, accountability, and training for those who responded to Christ and called themselves Methodists (Henderson). In nineteenth century America, Phineas Bresee picked up the torch of spreading scriptural holiness when Methodists, as he saw things, were no longer carrying out this mission (Bangs).

While Wesleyan-Arminian in his roots, Bresee sought to communicate this message in an American context. These contextual issues influence some of the nuances between Wesley's theology and practices and those of the leaders of the American holiness movement. While differences exist in these areas, these men both possess a *pathos* and sense of mission to prepare men and women for heaven.

Wesley and Bresee were simply following Jesus into the fields of England and the streets of inner-city Los Angeles respectively. Like Jesus who was unwelcome among the religious leaders of his day, both Wesley and Bresee found their ideas and approaches unwelcome among the religious leaders of their day, but they did not let these factors stop them. These men are *missional* in every sense of the word. Like Jesus telling parables in a field, Wesley and Bresee simply go where the people live. They have a strong sense of connection with the people of their day. This passion and sense of mission is evident in this famous quote of Wesley:

I design plain truth for plain people: Therefore, of set purpose, I abstain from all nice and philosophical speculations; from all perplexed and intricate reasonings; and, as far as possible, from even the show of learning, unless in sometimes citing the original Scripture. I labor to avoid all words which are not easy to be understood, all which are not used in common life; and, in particular, those kinds of technical terms that so frequently occur in Bodies of Divinity; those modes of speaking which men of reading are intimately acquainted with, but which to common people are an unknown tongue. (*Works* 5: 2)

This kind of passionate, *missional* preaching is of critical importance today.

A subtle danger needs highlighting at this point, however. The secret is not cultural relevance. The gospel is always culturally relevant. Sin is present in the cultural and social settings of our lives, and the gospel of grace that calls for holiness of heart and life must always provide the remedy with demonstrable measures culturally and socially.

Wesley and Breese were men who called for holiness of heart and life in their generations.

The danger here is that “cultural relevance” has become a kind of code word for “cultural adaptation.” Neither Wesley nor Bresee sought to redefine holy living to be more compatible with cultural or social trends. They were not preoccupied with manipulative techniques to be more appealing. Rather, they had a sense of urgency for calling men and women to seek to live Christlike lives, but always in ways that were relevant to the spiritual waywardness of cultural and social norms. Their goal was not to manipulate people into decisions. They did not seek to master techniques. These men allow the Holy Spirit to master them. Paul says, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). These two men certainly heeded this admonition. Skills and study are necessary still today, but the great need in this generation is men and women possessed of the same passion and sense of mission provided only through the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Overview

Chapter 2 reviews selected literature and pertinent research. The biblical and theological understanding of best practices for preaching that leads to Christlikeness in a Wesley-Arminian framework is considered. Chapter 3 presents a detailed explanation of the project’s design, the research methods, and the methods of data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study. Chapter 5 reports the major findings of the study and the practical applications that flow out of the research. It also offers suggestions for further inquiry and study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE

Problem

On the surface, Bill Hybels and Wesley actually share the same goals for the people under their care. Recently, Hybels' team did a research project to ascertain how their church is doing in the area of discipleship. Greg L. Hawkins and Cally Parkinson put the results of this study into a book. They said their goal was "to identify which activities were most effective in helping people grow in their love of God and love of others (Matthew 22:37-40)" (9). In sermon after sermon, Wesley defines Christian perfection as loving God and loving others. Obviously, Hybels and Wesley would not agree on the path toward the destination and the scope of attainability in this life, but they represent the agreement that exists across most theological spectrums regarding the importance of developing Christlike disciples.

Hybels and his team deserve a lot of credit for their dedication to developing Christlike disciples, all the more because of their commitment to evaluate their effectiveness. Hybels is battling the same issues that most pastors are. He writes with his characteristic candor, "I was shocked. I had thought that helping people become fully devoted followers of Christ was what we were all about at Willow, but the facts told us we could do better" (qtd. in Hawkins and Parkinson 9). Hawkins and Parkinson share three startling statistics from the research done at Willow Creek: "(1) Increased participation in church activities barely moved people to love God and others more; (2) We had a lot of dissatisfied people; (3) We had a lot of people so dissatisfied that they were ready to leave" (17). Most pastors can probably relate.

Willow Creek's team also implemented this questionnaire across North America, encompassing one thousand churches and over 250,000 congregants over a four-year period (Hawkins and Parkinson, 10). Obviously, they received pages and pages of results. The collected data correlates well with the Willow Creek data:

[E]ven though most (almost 80 percent) very strongly agree that they "love God more than anything," one-third do not serve the church and 50 percent do not serve the under resourced on a monthly basis. In the past year, 60 percent had fewer than six spiritual conversations with nonbelievers and 80 percent invited fewer than six people to church. Forty percent do not tithe. (19)

The data demonstrates that a huge gap exists between what Christians say they believe and what they live out in their everyday lives. Nazarene pastors, like all pastors in America, must find a way to call their people to a life that bridges that gap.

Purpose

The purpose of the research was to provide one means for evaluating changes in beliefs and practices of Christlike living in the twenty-first century for members and attendees at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene through the means of a sermon series presented over a period of six weeks. My hope was to discern changes that occurred because of a sermon series on sanctification. Research question #3 opened up the possibility for discerning preaching practices that may have helped to produce changes in beliefs and practices regarding Christlikeness.

Historical and Theological Framework

Nazarenes flow in the stream of Wesley-Arminian theology and tradition. Wesley's theology also drinks deeply from the stream of ancient tradition and Scripture, providing his followers today a sound biblical theology of Christlike living. Therefore, understanding Wesley's theology and the factors that shaped his beliefs, especially

regarding his order of salvation, is critical in the attempt to communicate Christlikeness from a Wesleyan-Arminian perspective in the twenty-first century. Understanding the informative influences on the doctrines of Christian perfection and entire sanctification is particularly imperative. While a comprehensive study is beyond the scope of this project, a sense of the historical and theological context that influences the development of these dynamic doctrines of Christian perfection as espoused by Wesley in the eighteenth century, and ultimately by Nazarenes in the nineteenth century, is both possible and necessary.

Key Definitions

The doctrines of Christian perfection and entire sanctification are not synonymous. Paul M. Basset and William M. Greathouse define entire sanctification as the gateway into Christian perfection:

Christian perfection doctrinally stated, is that idea which includes the following the notions: that the Christian is called to some sort of perfection of spirit or attitude or motive or even action in this life; that this perfection is more or less dependent upon the work of the Holy Spirit in the Christian believer; that the ideal is Christlikeness and is usually cast in terms of Christian love (19).

Wynkoop would call this the substance of holiness (303).

The next doctrine, entire sanctification, is more elusive than the idea of Christian perfection. Perfection is a term used much in the Bible, but the phrase *entire sanctification* does not occur except in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, depending on the translation that is used:

Entire sanctification is that doctrine which includes those notions stated as aspects of Christian perfection and in addition includes the following: That in the life of the believer there comes a moment when the believer actually does love God with all of the heart and soul, mind and strength, and neighbor as self; that this moment marks the beginning of a qualitatively

different relationship with God and neighbor and than that which existed previously, even though the person experiencing this moment was certainly a believer previously; that while this moment sees the believer perfected, it is also the beginning of a process of perfecting in love; that both the initiating moment and the process are always and in all ways dependent upon the grace of God in Christ; that integral to this moment and to the ensuing process is cleansing from sin (Basset and Greathouse 20).

In Wynkoop's words, entire sanctification represents the circumstance or means of Christian perfection (303). Wesley believes these doctrines are supported by Scripture and Christian tradition.

Scripture and Tradition

All doctrine must flow from Scripture. Wesley and the founders of the American holiness movement did not come up with a new doctrine but rediscovered and brought into synthesis the grand soteriological doctrines of justification, sanctification, and glorification that stretch back all the way to Paul in Romans 8:29-30:

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Therefore, Christian perfection and entire sanctification must find their origin in Scripture. George Croft Cell says, "Wesley found the truth of Christian perfection in the 'warp and woof' of Holy Scripture" (qtd. in Basset and Greathouse 206). Wesleyans and members of the holiness movement base their doctrines of entire sanctification and Christian perfection on Scripture.

However, tradition plays a major role, as well. Tradition helps modern Christians stay anchored in the past, despite the constant clamoring for the new. Staying connected with those who come before can also protect against new and novel doctrines with no

basis in Scripture. Christians should be very suspicious of a new doctrine after two thousand years of church history. Basset and Greathouse go so far as to say, “If the doctrine of entire sanctification is a new doctrine, a doctrine not grounded in the long history of the Christian faith and its practice, it is not to be accepted as valid and not to be held as authentically Christian” (18). Wesley’s beliefs regarding entire sanctification and Christian perfection are deeply rooted in the past.

Thomas C. Oden believes both doctrines are rooted in Christian tradition:

He [Wesley] was the grateful inheritor of the well-known order of salvation inherent in ancient Christian teaching. This order can be seen implicitly in the Council of Nicea and in the consensus bearing texts of Cyril of Jerusalem, John of Damascus, Thomas Aquinas, and John Calvin. Among Anglican divines, it is prominent in Thomas Cranmer, John Jewel, and John Pearson. (25)

Wesley embraces tradition as part of his quadrilateral, especially relying on the Church fathers of the first five centuries for his theological anchor regarding tradition. Scripture and tradition, for Wesley, uniformly teach the doctrine of Christian perfection.

Taylor, à Kempis, and Law

Three other theological influences were critical in shaping Wesley. In 1725, Wesley read Jeremy Taylor’s *Rule and Exercises of Holy Living* and *Rules and Exercises of Holy Dying*. In 1726, he read Thomas à Kempis’ work, *The Imitation of Christ*. The third author who influenced Wesley’s life and theology is William Law. His books *On Christian Perfection* and *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* impacted Wesley a year or two after the other works. Wesley summarizes the impact of these three men on his theology of Christian perfection in the next to last paragraph of *A Plain Account*:

In one view, it is purity of intention, dedicating all the life to God. It is the giving God all our heart; it is one desire and design ruling all our tempers. It is the devoting, not a part, but all our soul, body and substance to God.

In another view, it is all the mind which was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ walked. It is the circumcision of the heart from all filthiness, all inward as well as outward pollution. It is the renewal of the heart in the whole image of God, the full likeness of Him that created it. In yet another, it is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbor as ourselves. Now, take it in which of these views you please, (for there is no material difference) and this is the whole and sole perfection, as a train of writings prove to a demonstration, which I have believed and taught for these forty years, from the year 1725 to the year 1765. (*Works* 11: 444)

He clearly states that these men serve as a foundation for his teaching over the previous forty years. However, while these factors influence Wesley as a young man, the Anglican church of his youth also influenced him greatly.

Anglican Influence

Due to his Anglican background, Wesley evidences a moderating sensibility, avoiding one-sided readings in his many theological reflections. For instance, trying to balance the views of Augustine and Pelagius, Wesley developed a theological style that not only was sophisticated in the attempt to hold a diversity of truths in tension but also has on occasion puzzled his interpreters, both past and present, because of that very diversity (Collins, *Theology* 4). Kenneth J. Collins is one of the theologians who brings Wesley's conjunctive abilities most clearly into view:

Such a style of theological reflection, sophisticated and well nuanced in many respects, has resulted in the designation that Wesley was a "conjunctive" theologian. Thus, the most able and consistent interpretations of Wesley's theology have realized that is ever a matter of "both/and" and not "either/or." (4)

Examples of conjunctives he holds in tension are law and gospel, grace and works, justification and sanctification, crisis and process, and the list goes on and on (,4-5).

Albert C. Outler believes Wesley's conjunctives hold together the grand project of his theological career:

It is easy for us to miss the originality of this Wesleyan view of faith alone and holy living held together. He was a great evangelist preaching *sola fide*, and at the very same time, teaching converts to go on to perfection and to expect it in this life! His critics were quick to notice the strange move and to seize upon it as proof of Wesley's inconsistency. Actually, it was another of Wesley's characteristic "third alternatives"—maybe his most original one. (72)

His conjunctive theology is the foundation of his *ordo salutis* and becomes the unifying theme of his ministry, preaching, and theology. His interest in practical divinity leads him to embrace these conjunctives. At times, this strength makes Wesley appear to contradict himself. Truthfully, at times he does. However, in order to help his followers grow in Christlikeness and land on the heavenly shore, he is willing to deal with those criticisms.

The Wesleyan *Ordo Salutis*

Many people debate whether Wesley is a theologian. Certainly, he does not set out primarily to develop a systematic theology. His stated goal in the preface of his *Sermons* is "to know the way to heaven; how to land on that heavenly shore" (*Works* 5: 3). Wesley is primarily an evangelist-pastor who desires to show his people how they might prepare for eternity. For this reason, he developed the *ordo salutis*. In his attempt to lead people on the ultimate journey, he fashioned a pastoral theology as a by-product of his ministry in that vein and for that very specific purpose.

A Wesleyan Denomination

In the introduction of the first volume of his two-volume work on the history of the Church of the Nazarene, Timothy L. Smith says, "The Church of the Nazarene is a Wesleyan denomination whose organization on a national basis took place at Pilot Point, Texas in 1908" (19). Smith clearly declares that the Church of the Nazarene is a Wesleyan denomination. Given this fact, a firm understanding of Wesley's beliefs

concerning the doctrine of entire sanctification and Christian perfection is critical for the purpose of this project. However, one has to start with Wesley's doctrine of justification by faith to have an accurate understanding of these other two doctrines.

Justification by Faith

Justification by faith is the bedrock foundation of the Wesleyan *ordo salutis*. This doctrine is set in place very early in his ministry. Soon after Aldersgate in 1739, Wesley wrote his sermon "Justification by Faith." Oden says that more than any other of Wesley's homilies this one sets forth the core classic Pauline and Reformation teaching of justification (71). In this sermon Wesley says, "The plain scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins" (*Works* 5: 57). Wesley establishes a yearly conference, the first of which is in 1744, where Methodists come together for decisive conversation on doctrine and discipline. Wesley's first agenda item is to define justification. Oden says, "It is highly significant that the leading question for Methodist doctrine was from the outset 'justification.' This focuses the light on the essential beginning point for all Wesleyan teaching" (77). The definition given at this conference is "to be pardoned and received into God's divine favor" (78). For Wesley, justification is a forensic term, delineating the change in relationship made between God and humanity by the forgiveness of sins through the work of Christ on the cross.

Wesley is very Lutheran up to this point. Like Luther, he emphasizes the importance of the role of faith in justification. In his sermon "Justification By Faith," he writes, "But on what terms, then, is he justified who is altogether ungodly, and till that time worketh not? On one alone; which is faith: He 'believeth in Him that justifieth the ungodly'" (*Works* 5: 60). Later, he more sharply defines the faith that leads to

justification: “Justifying faith implies, not only a divine evidence or conviction that ‘God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself’; but a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for my sins, saved me, and gave himself for me” (61). He consistently insists on faith being the only condition of justification. For Wesley, like Luther, salvation begins at justification and is by faith alone.

Wesley does not leave off where Luther does, however. Luther believes only in an imputed righteousness at justification. Wesley is very suspicious of a doctrine of imputed righteousness because this teaching can easily lead to antinomianism. However, he does recognize that imputed righteousness has a place in Christian teaching. In his sermon “The Lord Our Righteousness, he writes, “To all believers of Christ it is imputed; to unbelievers it is not” (*Works* 5: 237). He simply does not stop with imputed righteousness. He writes later in the sermon, “That is, I believe God implants righteousness in every one to whom he has imputed it” (241). At this point, Wesley’s doctrine of justification begins to morph into his doctrine of initial sanctification.

Regeneration, new birth, and initial sanctification are synonyms for Wesley. Wesley believes sanctification to be the “immediate fruit of justification” (*Works* 5: 56). For Wesley, justification and regeneration occur at the same time but accomplish a different work. Therefore, he deals with the concepts separately, as he does in his sermon “On God’s Vineyard”:

They know, indeed, that at the same time a man is justified, sanctification properly begins. For when he is justified, he is born again, “born from above,” “born of the Spirit,” which, although it is not (as some suppose) the whole process of sanctification, is doubtless the gate of it. (7: 205)

Wesley's emphasis on the inward work of God becomes the distinctive and bedrock theological principle for his doctrine of entire sanctification. God does not come simply to declare believer's righteous but also to make them righteous.

In addition, these entrance points are not to be confused as a second tier level of Christian experience for Wesley. They constitute a glorious, dynamic, new relationship with God through Jesus Christ by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. Wesley writes in his sermon "The Marks of the New Birth" that "[a]n immediate and constant fruit of this faith whereby we are born of God, a fruit which can in no wise be separated from it, no, not for an hour, is power over sin—power over outward sin of every kind" (*Works* 5: 214). The new birth is a glorious new relationship with God that breaks the power and guilt of sin over the believer. As amazing as new birth is, Wesley believes even more is possible through a deeper or entire work of sanctification by which a believer could be cleansed from even the presence of sin.

(Entire) Sanctification by Faith

In order to understand Wesley's concept of entire sanctification, an understanding of Wesley's conception of sin is necessary. As has been noted, Wesley is clear in teaching that the new birth enables Christians to live a life of victory over willful sin. However, in his sermon "On Sin in Believers," he demonstrates that original sin is another issue:

Original sin is the corruption of the nature of every man, whereby man is in his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth contrary to the Spirit. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated; not subject to the law of God. (*Works* 5: 145)

He goes on to say, "The Christians at Corinth were spiritual men; else they had been no Christians at all; and yet they were not altogether spiritual: They were still in part, carnal"

(150). The remaining sin becomes a place of constant struggle for the new Christian.

Though the new believer can withstand sin, he or she not only has to battle the temptations of the Devil but also the tug of original sin that still exists in the heart.

Wesley says the new birth does not deal with the being of sin: “[H]e that believeth is born of God,’ and that is born of God does not commit sin;’ yet we cannot allow that he does not feel it within: It does not reign, but it does remain” (158). Entire sanctification is the solution for the problem of original sin in Wesley’s *ordo salutis*.

Wesley wrote voluminously on the doctrine of entire sanctification. However, his work, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, is the primary source used for this project to gain an understanding of Wesley’s theology of entire sanctification. Oden says, “In his *Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, Wesley reviewed four decades of teaching on the subject. He considered his views through this time as consistent” (237). Wesley wrote the *Plain Account* in 1766, which according to Collins, is a critical decade for the Wesleyan revival:

In a real sense the 1760’s belonged to the doctrine of Christian perfection. By then there were throughout the British Isles an increasing number of witnesses to this distinct work of grace, some of whom, no doubt, had responded to Wesley’s explicit preaching on the subject as, for example, when he arrived in London in November 1761. (*John Wesley* 193)

Like many of his works on this subject, the chronology and sequence of the *Plain Account* indicate that this work is also apologetic in nature (*Theology* 193). The work served as a pastoral guide for those who had experienced the work of entire sanctification in this decade.

A Plain Account deals extensively with the substance of Christian perfection. In his accustomed way, Wesley begins by explaining Christian perfection negatively. He

reaffirms his statements on this subject from his 1741 sermon “On Christian Perfection.” Believers, first, are not perfect in knowledge. On this side of heaven, ignorance of facts is an unpleasant reality leading to mistakes in judgments and other errors. Second, Wesley writes that no grace is so high that one cannot fall. Next, Christians still must deal with the infirmities of this life. He fully believes that believers still dwell in “houses of clay” and suffer from innumerable infirmities associated with these fallen bodies. Fourth, Wesley does not believe in a state of existence free from temptation. Last, Wesley flatly rejects a state of static perfection beyond a place for growth (*Works* 11: 374). Wesley presents a perfection that is attainable for believers this side of heaven in answer to objections that this doctrine is beyond the call of Scripture.

Wesley does not stop with a negative description of Christian perfection, however. Positively, he defines Christian perfection as a life of love. He writes, “The loving God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. This implies that no wrong temper, none contrary to love, remains in the soul; and that all the thoughts, words, and actions, are governed by pure love” (*Works* 394). Wesley is consistent in this definition from the beginning of his ministry to the end.

For Wesley, Christian perfection is the substance of holiness. Entire sanctification as a second, or subsequent, work of grace in the life of the believer is the circumstance or means of this deeper life (Wynkoop 303). Collins says, “In fact, it was Wesley himself, and not the American holiness movement, who first championed the notion of a ‘second’ work of grace...” (*Theology* 281). Collins also quotes several of Wesley’s letters in which he directly mentions a second work of sanctifying grace in the life of the believer. He wrote Thomas Olivers about being “neither forward nor backward in believing those

who think they have attained the ‘second blessing’” (*Letters*, 1757). As one more example, he wrote Samuel Bardsley in 1772 about the importance of not being ashamed of the “old Methodist” doctrine and pressing all believers to move on to perfection or the “second blessing” (1772). Perfection and “second blessing” come together in these letters.

As justification by faith occurs in a moment, entire sanctification occurs in a crisis moment of faith:

A man may be dying for some time; yet he does not, properly speaking, die, till the instant the soul is separated from the body; and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like manner, he may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin, till sin is separated from his soul; and in that instant he lives the full life of love. (Wesley, *Works* 11: 401-02)

Wesley uses the word *instant* to show he believes in a second, or subsequent, crisis work of entire sanctification occurring after justification in the life of the believer.

However, his conjunctive ability helps him balance the crisis with the process. He says, “Yet he still grows in grace, in the knowledge of Christ, in the love and image of God; and will do so, not only till death, but to all eternity” (*Works* 11: 402). God deals with the guilt and power of sin in the first work of grace and the being of sin, or the remaining inbred sin, in the second, all within the scheme of process and crisis.

For Wesley, the entrance into entire sanctification is the same as the entrance for justification. Collins quotes Wesley, saying, “[F]aith is immediately and directly necessary to sanctification. It remains that faith is the only condition which is immediately and proximately necessary to sanctification” (*Theology* 286). Wesley not only believes in justification by faith, but he also highlights the possibility of entire sanctification by faith.

Finally, the issue of the timing of entire sanctification in the life of the believer needs exploration. Many from Wesley's day argue about the possibility of entire sanctification in this lifetime. He spends much time answering questions on this subject during his ministry. In truth, Wesley at times seems to contradict himself on this subject.

Wesley consistently teaches that entire sanctification occurs on this side of eternity (Collins, *Theology* 305). In a letter to Elizabeth Hardy in 1758, he writes, "[N]either Jews nor heathens any more than Christians ever did well to enter into the New Jerusalem unless they are cleansed from all sin before they enter into eternity" (305). In his sermon "On Patience," he recounts the testimony of person after person, even 652 members of one society who testify clearly of an instantaneous experience of entire sanctification. He bases his whole doctrine of a crisis on testimonies such as these (Wesley, *Works* 6: 491). As a result of his belief in entire sanctification by faith alone, Wesley has to leave the door open for entire sanctification this side of heaven. He is able, however, to accomplish this task in a pastoral and nuanced way:

Though Wesley affirmed throughout his writings that the grace of entire sanctification is available now to the child of God to be received by simple faith, he nevertheless pointed out in a very pastoral fashion, that this gift of grace is not usually received until just prior to death. (Collins, *Theology* 304)

The Conference Minutes of 1744 and 1747 testify in agreement with this account. In addition, in his *Plain Account*, Wesley writes, "We grant that many of those who have died in the faith, yea, the greater part of those we have known, were not perfected in love till a little before their death" (*Works* 11: 388). Clearly, at times, Wesley contradicts himself. Perhaps, beyond his conjunctive bias and Anglican mediating manner, Collins hits on something more when he speaks of Wesley's role as a pastor. In this role, he no

doubt meets different people from different backgrounds and observes God works with people in many different ways. Perhaps Wesley understands better than most that God works as he wills just as the “wind blows where it will” (John 3:8). One thing is certain, however. He definitely believes in a crisis work of entire sanctification that cleanses the heart of everything but love for God and neighbor in this life following justification.

Glorification

Wesley’s belief in entire sanctification does not dim the hope of final glorification in any way. In his sermon “The New Creation,” Wesley deals in depth with the nature of the new heaven and new earth that God will bring into being when he returns to establish his final kingdom. Pertinent for this study, Wesley says, “But the most glorious of all will be the change which then will take place on the poor, sinful, miserable children of men” (*Works* 235). He describes the change as follows:

But they shall “hear a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God with me: And he will dwell with them; and they shall be his people; and god himself shall be their God” (Rev. 21:3-4). Hence will arise an unmixed state of holiness and happiness, far superior to that which Adam enjoyed in Paradise. (295-96)

Here, justification and sanctification find their final fulfillment on the heavenly shore.

Wesley’s Impact on Christendom

Wesley’s legacy is truly a worldwide one with denominations and churches across the globe still looking at him as their spiritual father over two centuries later. The Church of the Nazarene is one of those groups that look at Wesley as one of their spiritual ancestors. However, in the American context, some of the teachings and practices of the American proponents of holiness do not line up with those of Wesley. Therefore, an understanding of the American Holiness Movement of nineteenth-century America is

essential for an understanding of effective preaching on Christlikeness for Nazarenes in the twenty-first century.

The Wesleyan Way and the American Way

Wesley is famous for his reluctant willingness to preach in the fields of England, following in the path of George Whitefield. He embraces societies, classes, and bands as a means of support and accountability for the people he reaches through his preaching. However, he remained a member of the Anglican Church his whole life. He is firmly rooted in the past, while embracing what for him are new forms of ministry. Michael Pasquarello, III distances Wesley from what he calls American *popularizers* or preachers of the American holiness movement who accommodate themselves with the limitations of culture and tend to reject the importance of Christian tradition (60). He sees Wesley as being more consistent with exemplars such as Luther, Chrysostom, and Augustine (60). Wesley immerses himself in Scripture and in the tradition of the Church universal. He also places a strong emphasis on the sacramental life of the Anglican Church, which is lacking in the American setting (60).

These facts do not mean that Wesley is not willing to try new ways of ministry. He simply does so within the framework of the Anglican Church. Wesley, though willing to try new methods for evangelistic purposes when necessary, remained *a high churchman*.

His ancestors in the American context are very different in this regard. In the American context, these Anglican high-church practices are not important. This factor becomes the root of many of the different approaches between the Methodist leaders in America and Wesley and his followers.

Francis Asbury to 1865

Bruce Moyer says, “Wesley’s message was transplanted to America by the emigration of Methodists, who beginning in 1766, started organizing classes and societies in the colonies” (66). Leading the charge, of course, is Francis Asbury. Stephen Lennox says, “Initiating changes which minimized liturgy and placed greater emphasis on preaching, Asbury sought an itinerant ministry that would reach the unchurched, maintain the faith of the converted, and minimize the complacency of the Methodist ministers” (43). Melvin E. Dieter believes that understanding Asbury and the early itinerant Methodist preachers is essential to understanding the major difference between Wesley and the preachers of the early American holiness movement:

Those who look for the difference between original Wesleyanism and the tone and teaching of the American holiness movement will probably discover no radical differences in theology and belief, but rather, they will find subtle differences in emphases that derive from the application of all that was America in the nineteenth century to the promotion and practices of the Wesleyan emphasis. (20)

Asbury and those who follow him personify the American spirit. They are rugged, often uneducated frontiersmen who are intent on establishing a Christian continent. The Methodist movement in America is a populist movement.

The Hermeneutic of American Populism

Lennox emphasizes this populist hermeneutical approach that served as a linchpin of American hermeneutics for at least a century, mainly the century that gave birth to the American holiness movement (43). He says, “From its beginnings, it [Methodism] had been a movement of the people, and while it came to be embraced by all levels of society, its doctrines and methods first found readiest acceptance among the common people” (43). American Methodism, imbibing the spirit of the formation of the new American

nation, naturally became a movement of the people. Lennox goes on to say, “Common people hear the gospel from common preachers who offer the ‘dignity of choice’ and the chance to become a class leader, exhorter, local preacher, or circuit rider” (43). The American Methodists fully contextualized Wesley’s message and methods for the American continent. This populist hermeneutics, married to American idealism, led to holiness revivals that spanned much of the nineteenth century.

American Idealism and Wesley’s Message

The period after the Civil War and the coming turn of the century ushered in a state of American optimism that is still unrivaled in American history. American optimism definitely affects the theology and aspirations of the nineteenth-century American holiness movement:

[A] factor in the total milieu was the idealism which inspired the American national destiny—a divine destiny whose goal was to create a new society, free from the ills which had plagued the societies left behind when immigrants set out for America.... [T]he inherent optimism in this American dream was readily assimilated with the optimism of perfectionism in the holiness movement.... For the holiness advocate it was all part of a grand, divine plan to usher in the most glorious and last dispensation. (Dieter 14)

Harold E. Raser says, “Spreading to many American denominations (mainly in the North), the revival had inspired its true believers to hope that Christian perfection might carry America and its churches into a millennium of righteousness, justice, and peace” (116). American holiness movement pioneers thoroughly imbibed the spirit of manifest destiny that was prevalent in America in the nineteenth century.

Nineteenth-Century American Revivalism

Dieter says, “It is a commonly accepted truism in American church history that from the time of the Great Awakening until the close of the nineteenth century revivalism

was the dominant force in the shaping of American Protestantism” (1). Certainly, Wesley is no stranger to revival. His Aldersgate experience launched a revival that marked the eighteenth century in England as the American holiness movement did in America in the nineteenth century. However, the dynamics of the revival in America was of such a different nature that Wesley’s message undergoes some alterations.

Dieter writes, “But the American holiness movement was just that—both ‘American and holiness’” (18). Dieter believes the revival spirit of the American nineteenth century has a great impact on the preaching of entire sanctification in America:

To the Wesleyan perfectionists who believed that the sinner’s response to the revivalists appeal for justification by faith still left him, as a Christian convert, short of a life of uninterrupted love for God and man; it was but a short step, given the prevailing mood and methods of American revivalism, to move in with the “second blessing” message. (19)

The preachers of the American holiness movement seized the opportunity. Dieter goes on to say, “The invitation was a universal one. Every convert was a candidate. The sense of immediacy was also there; the time to enter into the ‘higher life’ was ‘now’” (20).

American idealism and revivalism came through clearly in the nineteenth-century preaching of holiness. These two factors resulted in differences of application, and sometimes interpretation, of Wesley’s message of entire sanctification in the holiness preaching of the nineteenth-century. However, a man named Charles Finney made his mark on the religious milieu of this century as well.

Finneyism and the Wesleyan Way

Finney is a polarizing figure who had a profound impact on the American religious environment of the nineteenth century. Pasquarello notices a shift in Finney's ministry that puts much more focus on the audience than Wesley does:

Finney inspired a "Copernican revolution," which made religion exciting and "audience centered," scorning traditional religion for producing dull and ineffective communication, borrowing instead from the rhetorical techniques of populist politicians, and significantly, shifting the emphasis from the truth to be communicated to the effective communication of that truth, thereby changing the subject of preaching from message to method. (61)

Hughes Oliphant Old calls this type of preaching "the Great American School" (11). He boldly states, "One admits the Great American School had a rather weak understanding of Scripture.... The school was so completely absorbed in revival and reform that Scripture was of interest insofar as it could point the way to these goals" (11).

Pasquarello strongly says in response to this quote, "In other words, means and ends were divided and confused" (62). Under Finney, the end justifies the means. American pragmatism and idealism combined to give a distinctive American flavor to the Wesleyan message.

Finney's focus was on results, namely converts. Pasquarello believes Finney employed a pragmatic populism in his evangelistic approach:

In his zeal to reach lost souls, moreover, Finney's definition of what constitutes "useful" and "practical" was increasingly shaped by a form of Biblicism grounded in private judgment and personal experience, a Christian antitraditionalism which, while representing liberation from the Christian past to pursue the "new" and "improved," also tended to a form of "Christianity without Christ." (62)

Rhetoric and pragmatism replaced theology in the preaching of Finney (65). Certainly, all nineteenth-century preachers did not go this far. However, pragmatic preaching was another factor, along with populism and revivalism that led some American holiness

preachers in the nineteenth century to develop different approaches of preaching and, at times, theology from Wesley.

Phoebe Palmer's Biblicism

In keeping with the populism of the day, women were even on the front lines of American revivalism of the nineteenth century. While many women were prominent factors in the American holiness movement, none rose higher than Phoebe Palmer. Mark R. Quanstrom says, "Phoebe Palmer was without question, the most influential religious woman of her generation" (40). She was perhaps as great an influence on the preaching of holiness in America in the nineteenth century as any other person. Spurred on by personal tragedy and her sister, Sarah Lankford, Palmer entered into a time of soul searching that culminated on 26 July 1837 in an experience of entire sanctification. Three years later, she assumed the leadership of the Tuesday Meeting for the Promotion of Holiness that her sister began in 1835. She also produced more than fifteen books on the topic of holiness. By 1850, she and her husband spent at least half a year at Methodist revivals and camp meetings (Lennox 88-89). Smith says, "Hundreds of Methodist preachers, including at least two bishops and three who were later to hold that office, were sanctified under Mrs. Palmer's influence" (12). Her influence on the American holiness movement spanned the entire nineteenth century and extended even well into the twentieth century.

Palmer, like many other American holiness preachers, does what Wesley does not do. She bases the second work emphasis of entire sanctification on biblical passages. In other words, she looks for proof from Scripture for not only the "substance" of entire sanctification but also the "circumstance" (Wynkoop 303). Her primary contribution for

the nineteenth-century American holiness movement was her clear and simple explanation of the method for obtaining the second blessing. She based her method on the last third of Exodus 29:37 and the last half of Matthew 23:19 as her proof texts. Quanstrom says, “She taught that when believers consecrated themselves on the altar, they were made holy” (40-41). This new emphasis gave rise to altar theology. Palmer writes, “Christ is the CHRISTIAN’S ALTAR. Lay body, soul, and spirit upon his merits” (original emphasis 242). The confluence of American idealism, revivalism, and an almost scientific empiricism of spiritual processes led preachers of the American holiness movement to press for the entire sanctification of all believers as soon as they were ready to consecrate their lives and receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Entire Sanctification and Spirit Baptism

David L. Cubie, former Chair of Religion at Mount Vernon University, says, “The baptism of the Holy Spirit was the great discovery of the American holiness movement” (Personal interview). Daniel Steele was a leading proponent of Spirit baptism for the American holiness movement. According to Richard Taylor, the editor of a volume of leading Wesleyan thinkers, “Few if any theologians have had a more extensive or enduring influence on the modern holiness movement than Daniel Steele” (*Leading Wesleyan Thinkers* 253). He writes eloquently on the subject in *The Gospel of the Comforter*:

The day of Pentecost was a pattern day; all the days of this dispensation should have been like it, or should have exceeded it. But alas! the Church has fallen down to the state in which it was before Christ to begin all over again.... We need a baptism the Spirit as much as the apostles did at the of Christ’s resurrection. (32-33)

Steele clearly sees Pentecost as a pattern for all believers of all centuries. Furthermore, he sees this experience after new birth as synonymous with entire sanctification, and he sees this experience as the great need of all Christians.

The practice of uniting a personal Pentecost with entire sanctification had as strong impact on American holiness preaching. American holiness preachers now had clear biblical precedent for preaching entire sanctification as a second work of grace. Quanstrom says, “With Pentecost interpreted as the occasion of entire sanctification, there was biblical evidence that sanctification was what they believed it to be, that is a second work of grace wrought instantaneously in the heart of the regenerated believer...” (35). Personal Pentecost became a model for holiness preachers well into the twentieth century.

Steele was also very clear about what the baptism of the Holy Spirit accomplished. He believed, “It did nothing less than destroy the carnal nature” (99). The American holiness preachers were as expansive as the spirit of the age in defining the results of this baptism of the Holy Spirit and eradication of the carnal nature. Asbury Lowery writes, “Holiness in men is identical with the holiness of God. ‘Be ye holy for I am holy,’ means incorporate my holiness into your being—be a ‘partaker of the Divine nature’” (131). The only difference in the holiness of humans and God is that humanity’s holiness is derived and God’s is inherent. The spirit of optimism gripping America at this time seems to influence preaching on holiness well into the twentieth century. Over time, pressure mounts for a denomination committed in propagating this message.

Phineas Bresee and the Church of the Nazarene

Bresee was a committed Methodist pastor for many of his adult years. However, over time his philosophy of ministry put him at odds with Methodist leadership. Interestingly enough, his initial reason for forming the Church of the Nazarene was not over the doctrine of entire sanctification. The primary factor that led Bresee to separate from Methodism was his program for evangelizing the poor through the Peniel Mission in Los Angeles (Smith 108).

Actually, the doctrine of entire sanctification experienced renewed emphasis among California Methodists at that time. Bresee, however, was intent on forming a holiness church for the poor in the area and rather than give up his calling. He and Dr. Widney held the first service of what would become the Church of the Nazarene on 6 October 1895 (Bangs 140). Bresee says, “The reason ... was that the machinery and the methods of the older churches had proved a hindrance to the work of evangelizing the poor” (qtd. in Smith 110-11). Entire sanctification would not play a part in the separation that led to the formation of the Church of the Nazarene as a denomination until later.

Finally, in 1899, Bresee became convinced a denomination was necessary for the propagation of the holiness message across the nation. He grew sharper in his rhetoric toward the church of his upbringing as he saw Methodism becoming more hostile to the holiness message. A friend reproached him for his sharp rhetoric toward his spiritual “mother.” Bresee responded that Wesley’s church is “not an old lady to be coddled in the corner, and protected from public gaze” (qtd. in Smith 124). Bresee purposefully cut all ties with his mother denomination, fully imbibing the holiness message of the nineteenth century and raising up the denomination that would most forcefully propagate the

Wesleyan message of holiness into the twentieth century. However, a half-century later, the Nazarenes would find themselves wrestling over their own *holiness wars*.

Holiness Wars

Almost one hundred years after the holiness movement in America gained a full head of steam following the Civil War, the Church of the Nazarene faced an identity crisis of their own. In the early 1960s, Everett Lewis Cattell, president of Malone College, wrote a little book that caused uproar in the Church of the Nazarene. Cattell was a Quaker from birth. As such, holiness teaching influenced him from his earliest days. In the preface of this book, in which he argues for the need for discipline in the life of the entirely sanctified, he briefly described a journey that he believed many like him have taken. He told of his failed efforts at living the sanctified life. Furthermore, in his own studies, he discovered discrepancies between Wesley's teachings and the leaders of the American holiness movement. He offered this analysis: "By studying the writings of the really responsible leaders in the movement and particularly going back to Wesley himself, I found the answers to these questions given, but usually tucked away out of the light of major emphasis" (128). In 1964, leaders in the denomination decided to use this book in its ministerial course of study program. However, many were displeased with the new emphasis of using Wesley as a source of Nazarene theology "because John Wesley's writings were not entirely consistent with the holiness writings that the Church of the Nazarene had previously recommended as authoritative and with which they had been familiar" (Quanstrom 129). At this point, Nazarenes entered into a time of soul searching that ultimately led to many divergent views regarding the nature, scope, and circumstance of entire sanctification. A full study of these differences is not possible for this project,

but highlighting them is critical, since the differences lie at the heart of the divide in the Nazarene denomination on the issue of entire sanctification. These differences affect the definition of this doctrine in the Nazarene denomination, as well as its attainability and scope.

Wesley and the Nazarenes

First, the American holiness movement and the early Nazarenes heavily emphasized the instantaneous aspect of entire sanctification unlike Wesley who tried to keep the instantaneous and the gradual aspects in balance. In early Nazarene language, the terms *sanctification* and *entire sanctification* became synonymous for the most part. Wesley believes the term *sanctification* includes the entire salvific process, encompassing justification through glorification. In Wesleyan thinking, the gradual aspect is the given. For Nazarenes two hundred years later, the instantaneous aspect of sanctification is the given (Quanstrom 130). Quanstrom says, “This gradual emphasis was what was new, and it was not entirely consistent with the holiness literature that been previously recommended” (130). More and more, this kind of literature with more of an emphasis on process is the kind of literature students in the Nazarene course of study are reading. A seismic shift in thinking is beginning to take place in the Nazarene denomination regarding the doctrine of entire sanctification, holiness, or Christlikeness.

Second, another divergent emphasis has to do with attainability. The holiness people of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century believed the only conditions for receiving sanctifying grace are faith and consecration. As has been noted already, Wesley does not discount the possibility of entire sanctification before death. He does leave the door open for entire sanctification occurring right before death in other places, however.

Candidly, this area is one area where Wesley does seem to contradict himself. In any form at all, however, this Wesleyan teaching is, of course, quite revolutionary for Nazarenes in the mid-twentieth century.

Next, Wesley's instruction on how one is to seek entire sanctification is also divergent from the teaching of the early Nazarenes. Early Nazarenes believed all that is necessary is faith and consecration. Palmer's altar theology, in combination with Finney's new brand of revivalism, was the major impetus behind this emphasis. These two people, in tandem with the progressive Enlightenment era in which they lived, turned the salvation process into an empirical formula for evangelistic success more so than Wesley would have been comfortable doing. Wesley the Methodist does clearly lay out the way of salvation in sermons such as "The Scripture Way of Salvation," but he always emphasizes that entire sanctification is ultimately according to God's sovereign will and free grace.

The next area of divergence highlights an issue where neither the early nor the later Nazarenes are in step with Wesley. Early Nazarenes tended to overstate the effects of entire sanctification in comparison with Wesley. By the mid-twentieth century, a book written by William Deal, encapsulated the mood of mid-twentieth Nazarenes on the doctrine of entire sanctification. The title of the book, *Problems With the Sanctified Life*, alone would be an oxymoron for early Nazarenes. Problems and the sanctified life do not go together for them. By the middle of the twentieth century, the factor of the humanity of the entirely sanctified received more emphasis. The emphasis of the second half of Deal's book is that because of the humanity of the believer, one experience of entire sanctification could look radically different from the experience of someone else. His

new emphasis made it hard to define what entire sanctification and victorious living should look like (Quanstrom 123). Both these views represent extremes that Wesley would not buy into completely, but here Wesley may be more comfortable with the early Nazarenes. Clearly, what some Nazarenes today call infirmities Wesley would call sin (134).

Finally, in 1973, Wynkoop wrote a book that would polarize the Nazarene denomination into two camps on the issue of entire sanctification. Her book is the first Wesleyan theology formulated by a respected Nazarene theologian that deviates from typical American holiness orthodoxy (Quanstrom 150). Wynkoop clearly challenges the whole issue of *secondness* in this book:

Wesleyans speak of a second work of grace or a second crisis or blessing in the Christian life. What is the significance of *two* special moments among the many in life? Why two, not one or three or 100? How is one recognized from the other or how does one distinguish the first from the second? (original emphasis 47)

This teaching is obviously shocking for average Nazarenes. The idea of a second work of grace is one of the bedrock theological truths of the holiness movement. She goes on to say, “Is one fully saved when he is regenerated or only partially saved? If God does not save completely, couldn’t He if He would? And if He would, why does He not do so in the new birth?” (47). This book is a truly radical work in the Nazarene world of this time.

The basis for this new teaching is what Wynkoop calls a credibility gap. In her estimation, many of the professors of entire sanctification are not living what they preach. Her solution is a total restructuring of the conceptual framework within which holiness theologians have worked up to that point. Her hermeneutics, which she believes fits Wesley’s, is relational, or what she calls Wesley’s theology of love.

As important as the credibility gap is for Wynkoop, a deeper issue lies at the heart of her teaching. The most important issue for Wynkoop regards her view of sin. She fervently rejects the idea of the eradication of sin as if sin is a foreign substance residing within humans. In her mind, this approach leads toward a *magical* view of salvation that she absolutely opposes. Wynkoop prefers talking about salvation as an ethical relationship (Quanstrom, 144). As Quanstrom summarizes her, “Sin is not some subvolitional substance dwelling inside humans. Sin is simply the description of the estranged relationship between God and people. Positively, holiness is the description of a harmonious relationship with God” (144). Wynkoop believes Wesley’s frequent descriptions of holiness, as loving God with “all the heart, soul, mind, and strength” serves as evidence in favor of this relational hermeneutics in her mind (144).

A relational emphasis creates different emphases regarding entire sanctification than the proponents of early American holiness doctrine do. At issue for this project, again, is Wynkoop’s definition of sin. She thoroughly rejects words such as *eradication* and *sinful nature*. Alternatively, Wynkoop prefers words such as *cleansed* as in “cleansed from all sin” (251). From here Wynkoop easily takes the next step to do away with any need for a second work of grace, at least from God’s side of the equation:

When a person is “saved” he is wholly saved. God by His grace ... saves the whole man.... God does not partially and then fully save.... Sin is not partially destroyed at one time and fully destroyed at another, nor is a second work of grace for the purpose of correcting the defects of the first. At least there is no biblical warrant for this kind of explanation. The “*second crisis*” is ... *not different in degree, from the first*. (original emphasis 206-07)

Revolutionary is the only word to describe this line of thinking at this time in the Nazarene denomination.

Wynkoop does not deny a need for a second work of grace, though. She simply does not see the need for a second work based on the need for the eradication of some sort of substance of sin in the life of the believer. Sin is not a substance for Wynkoop. Sin is relationship focused on self instead of God. She believes in the need for another work, but the need for another work of grace is more dependent on the need of spiritual maturation in the life of the believer.

Wynkoop's work eventually caused a division in the denomination between those who emphasize a substantial concept of entire sanctification and those who emphasize a relational concept. William Kirkemo does excellent research into the difference between those in the Nazarene denomination who emphasize a *substantialist* view of entire sanctification in opposition with those who emphasize a *relationalist* approach. The *substantialists* emphasize the eradication of the sinful nature by a fiery baptism of the Holy Spirit. The *relationalists* emphasize relationships and growth that will eventually foster a moment of entire consecration and cleansing from sin (6-7). The moment of consecrations comes as the natural process of growth in the grace of initial sanctification. Theologians such as H. Ray carry on this relational ontology in the denomination in the years following Wynkoop's work. Dunning's *Grace, Faith, and Holiness* became a major work promoting this view when it became the theology book used by the seminary in Kansas City in 1989.

However, the *substantialists*, under the leadership of theologians such as Richard Taylor and J. Kenneth Grider, continue to press their teachings. In fact, Richard Taylor wrote an article in *God's Revivalist* in 1999, entitled, "Why the Holiness Movement Died." He admits in the article that the title is rhetorical flourish more than an actual

assessment of where the movement is at in 1999 (Quanstrom 1731). However, in the article, he calls the preachers of the Church of the Nazarene to return to teaching entire sanctification as a second work of grace, eradicating sin in men and women through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The battle lines are clear heading into the twenty-first century. Furthermore, preachers in the Church of the Nazarene have no clear, coherent message regarding their cardinal doctrine heading into the new century.

The Wesleyan Way and the Postmodern, Pluralistic, Twenty-First Century—Globalized Community

Rapid changes brought on in the second half of the twentieth century only served to heighten the problems facing Nazarenes in their effort to unite around their core message. Globalism, pluralism, and postmodernism created a brand new set of challenges. The denomination struggled mightily to adapt in the midst of these times of transformational cultural change, even if they were not successful.

A Global Parish

Wesley says, “I look upon all the world as my parish; thus far I mean, that in whatever part of it I am, I judge it meet, right, and my bounden duty to declare unto all that are willing to hear, the glad tidings of salvation” (*Journals* 1: 201). At no time in history has this statement, or mission, faced greater challenge. Wesleyan-Holiness preachers of the twenty-first century must meet theological and hermeneutical challenges seriously to have any chance of preaching a coherent, clear message of Wesleyan holiness in the context of this current mission field. Theology, hermeneutics, and preaching are comparable to an iceberg. The human eye sees only the part of the iceberg that ascends above the ocean surface. Beneath the ocean surface is a huge mass of ice

unseen by the unaided human eye. Theology and hermeneutics are the mass of ice beneath the surface of the iceberg. Homiletics is the mass of ice seen by the people preachers encounter in their mission field today. The stronger the base under this iceberg, the clearer the preachers will be in their practice of preaching holiness in today's society.

Admittedly, many wonder if striving for a coherent, clear message is even possible. Specifically, in the Nazarene context, even the theological giant and former general superintendent, Purkiser, wrote a letter to General Superintendent John Knight that gives voice regarding what many were wondering but afraid to speak or put into writing in 1986. He wrote the letter in the heat of a debate over a new Nazarene theology book Dunning agreed to write for the Nazarene denomination. The book clearly embraces Wynkoop's theology. The debate around this new *official* Nazarene theology grew so contentious in 1986 that Purkiser wrote Knight saying, "I want to raise one question that this committee cannot really answer. That is whether or not we have outgrown the need for and possibility of an 'official theology'" (*Letter*). The challenges to come would certainly put this question on the table for many people in the denomination.

District Superintendent Trevor Johnston of the South Central Ohio District Church of the Nazarene highlights the heightened problem in the current global context of the Church of the Nazarene. He sees in Latin America an eclectic blend of theology is arising and brings together Calvinism, Pentecostalism, and Nazarene doctrine. These issues all highlight the challenge for Nazarenes who want to proclaim a clear, coherent message of holiness in the current global context.

These factors only illuminate part of the challenges in articulating a clear Wesleyan-Holiness message in the twenty-first century. One other problem lurked

beneath the surface of the holiness debates of the past century. The world of the twentieth century began a major philosophical shift that shaped and continues to shape the way people view life. A postmodern worldview replaced the modern worldview in the twentieth century. Postmodern philosophy was the background noise behind the discordant music of the holiness theological debate in the twentieth century. An approach to leading people into entire sanctification in what felt like the empirical approach of the Enlightenment mind-set underwent dramatic changes in the second half of the twentieth century. Certainly, other factors played a part. The optimism and idealism of late nineteenth-century America no longer existed after two world wars, Vietnam, and Watergate. The Nazarene movement transitioned from a frontier movement into more of a denominational enterprise over time. These elements all played a role in the theological debates during the last thirty years of the twentieth century. However, the postmodern beat, present in the works of theologians like Wynkoop and Dunning, was also a major factor in the new melody of holiness theology in the late twentieth century. These new theologians with their emphasis on process, love, and the limitations of human nature coincided neatly with the postmodern age of their time.

The good news is that postmodernism is more familiar now. With forty years of hindsight, the time is ripe for a balanced, harmonious approach for holiness preaching in the twenty-first century. However, postmodernism splintered enough over the years that words such as *post-Christian* and *pluralist* may be a better description of the environment at this time. Whatever, Wesley provides necessary meter for a beautiful, attractive message of holiness for every generation. However, gaining an understanding

of the postmodern philosophy that so influences the world today is essential in order for the holiness message to ring out in the twenty-first century.

Transitioning from Gutenberg to Google

Leonard Sweet describes the shift away from modernism as a shift from the Gutenberg generation into the Google generation:

As befits a book culture, Guternbergers learned how to parse and exegete word. In fact, images were seen as shallow, without intellectual content, and dangerous. The secure and stable “fixed meaning” of words contrasts sharply with the openness of visual images and metaphors. (177)

The Google world now dominates what once was a Gutenberg world. In the Google world, metaphor is the grammar of the people:

In a Google world, the primary cultural currency is image and metaphor. Biologically as well as socially, metaphors are primary and primal. When you dream, what do you dream in? Words? The natural language of the brain is metaphor, which explains why creative children register more dream activity than noncreative ones. (178)

The task of theologians, *hermeneuts* and *homileticians*, is to learn to communicate ageless gospel truths in a world that has moved from a rationalistic, word-oriented context into a world built on metaphor, sensation, and pluralistic relativism.

Understanding the postmodern philosophical worldview that prevails in the world today is a critical step today’s pastors must take in this quest.

Primer on Postmodernism

Diogenes Allen observes, “The foundations of the modern world are collapsing, and we are entering a post-modern world” (2). At this point, society finds itself dealing with the impact of that shift. The Church always has to adapt with the societal changes in culture. G. Graham Johnston continues, “[T]he postmodern mindset is not exclusive to the unchurched. It’s shared by those folks who fill church sanctuaries each Sunday” (9).

Christians cannot simply take a bunker mentality and pretend the Christian worldview that predominated through most of their lives is still the prevailing worldview. As Allen says, “This cultural gap must be bridged, within the church and outside it, so that the Christian worldview engages the listener’s worldview in a life-altering encounter” (qtd. in Johnston 9). In order to understand the postmodern worldview, gaining a basic understanding of the modern worldview will prove helpful.

K. A. Beville suggests, “[T]he modern age lasted two-hundred years from 1789-1989” (23). However, others argue for an earlier date for the beginning of the modern period, going back to René Descartes in 1641 when he promulgated the famous statement *cogito ergo sum*: “I think, therefore I am.” The modern period embraces the empirical, scientific worldview wholeheartedly:

Descartes thus defined human nature as a thinking substance and the human person as an autonomous rational subject. Isaac Newton later provided the scientific framework for modernity, picturing the physical world as a machine the laws and regularity of which could be discerned by the human mind. The modern human can appropriately be characterized as Descartes’s autonomous, rational substance encountering Newton’s mechanistic world. (Grenz 3)

The modern mind-set spawns the belief that humanity is capable of anything.

Not surprisingly, the modernist Enlightenment project is a reaction against premodern preoccupation with superstition, supernatural speculation, and revelation. People no longer need superstitions or even biblical revelation because now, through empirical study and scientific rationalism, they can conclusively determine what is true and real. As modernism is a reaction to the premodern worldview, postmodernism is a thorough rejection of the modernist, Enlightenment project:

Postmodernism refers to an intellectual mood and an array of cultural expressions that call into question the ideals, principles, and values that

lay at the heart of the modern mind-set. Postmodernity, in turn, refers to an emerging epoch, the era in which we are living, the time when the postmodern outlook increasingly shapes our society. Postmodernity is the era in which postmodern ideas, attitudes, and values reign—when postmodernism molds culture. It is the era of the postmodern society. (Grenz 12)

As is often the case, the church responded slowly in the midst of these cultural changes of the twentieth century. By the time the source of the changes became recognizable, much of the change had already occurred.

Stanley Grenz says, “The immediate intellectual impulse for the dismantling of the Enlightenment project came from the rise of deconstruction as a literary theory” (5). Deconstruction is an extension of a theory in literature called structuralism. This theory destroys all concept of metanarrative in literature (5). Every person interprets a text freshly and will have a different interpretation based on their view of life (5). Postmodern philosophy simply takes the literary deconstruction theory and pushes the implications of this theory on the totality of life (5). Grenz says, “Just as a text will be read differently by each reader, they said, so reality will be ‘read’ differently by each knowing self that encounters it” (6). Deconstruction is the incubator for the postmodern movement.

However, postmodernism does not gain momentum until three or four decades later (17). Grenz says, “During the 1970’s, the postmodern challenge to modernity infiltrated further into mainstream culture.... In the 1980’s, the move from fringe to mainstream came to completion.... Between 1960 and 1990 postmodernism emerged as a cultural phenomenon” (17). Vietnam and Watergate created massive distrust of leadership in America. The baby boomer generation was coming of age at this time. In time, the excess of reactions against modern values caused the disintegration of the American family, creating distrust in the home. All of these factors provided a real

incubator for postmodernism, but one factor in particular caused the rapid spread of postmodern philosophy in this period (17). The information age became the off ramp from modernism into postmodernism:

No factor looms more significant than the arrival of the information era. In fact, the spread of postmodernism parallels and has been dependent on the transition to an information society. The move from the modern era to the postmodern era is the move from the industrial age to the information age. The factory was the symbol of the industrial age and the computer is the symbol of the information age. (17)

Preachers must learn to minister in this new world. Cross-cultural missionaries must learn the language and worldview of their context before they can minister to the people they are seeking to reach. Pastors in America today are now cross-cultural missionaries in what feels like a foreign land at times. The good news is that they can learn this language with some effort.

Today, Christians have enough experience and research to gain a working understanding of this new worldview in order to begin to penetrate the postmodern world with the gospel. Johnston gives ten characteristics of postmodernism that will help in this effort. The first and foremost characteristic is a wholesale rejection of the Enlightenment and its tenets. This characteristic represents the essence of postmodernism. The second characteristic grows out of the first. Postmoderns have a hard time with truth because of the work of Foucault, Derrida, and Lyotard. According to G. Johnston, they argue “that truth is not an objective idea but a human construct, something that individuals create” (31). As an extension of these first two characteristics of postmodernity, all authority is suspect. Disregard for authority is a bedrock tenet of postmodernism. Postmoderns believe those in authority simply use truth for their own benefit. The result of this belief is that “[i]n relation to preaching, postmodern people will tend to perceive the preacher as

voicing a personal viewpoint, ‘That is your interpretation of the Bible’” (34). Scripture and those who preach the Word of God bear no inherent, intrinsic authority in this new world.

These first three facts created a very unstable world. When applied to self, the world becomes even more unstable. G. Johnston says, “As the concept of deconstruction was set in motion, the same principles began to be applied to the ‘self’” (37). The net result of this factor according to Johnston is that “[t]here can be no fixed identity, no sense of self, no unified human soul” (37). Put another way, Richard J. Middleton and Brian J. Walsh say, “This is the nomadic self, on the road with the carnival” (58). Preachers must help their hearers find meaning in their lives through the gospel. Radical individualism will lead people on a path of self-destruction. A Wesleyan focus on love for God and others within the framework of Wesley’s *ordo salutis* can lead people today on a new path of fulfillment found in a life of love.

The fifth characteristic is another outgrowth of the second characteristic. Postmoderns tend to be very pragmatic in life, so what works becomes more important than what is right. Therefore, preachers today will not only have to “point out the moral way but to establish why one should care about morality in the first place” (43). Modernist acceptance of universal truth and principles no longer exists in a huge segment of society. Preachers will have to find ways to communicate truth in this deconstructed society that believes all truth is relative.

The sixth characteristic of postmodernism is the desire for wholeness (44). Postmodernity embraces a wider perspective of reality. They are on a quest for anything that exists beyond the empirical realm. This philosophy is very open to spirituality, but

they tend to accept all versions of spirituality. Understanding this aspect of postmodernism can open the door for preachers in the Wesleyan-Holiness stream to provide spiritual answers in Christ.

Next, media plays a big role in the lives of postmoderns. G. Johnston makes an astute comparison between Gutenberg and Spielberg to drive this point home:

Consider it a trade of Gutenberg for Spielberg, because in the modern world the printed word mattered. In fact, *Time* magazine named Gutenberg the “person of the last Millenium” for inventing the printing press and paving the way for the Enlightenment.... (48)

However, when *LIFE* magazine asked, “Who’s The Top Boomer?” Spielberg tops the list, followed by Steve Jobs of Apple. Technology is a god for many people who drink in the postmodern *ethos*. One of the difficulties this reality place on preachers today is that technology blurs the lines of reality and morality. Johnston observes, “Postmodernity blurs the lines between commercial and product, actual event and fiction, and news and entertainment” (49). Ethics and truth are essential aspects of Wesleyan holiness teaching. However, in this media-saturated society lines of ethics become easily blurred. Awareness of the impact of media in society, therefore, not only influences style issues in preaching but substance issues as well.

Next, postmodern culture tends toward arrogance. Postmoderns embrace a high-minded bigotry toward the Bible as some ancient text written for ancients a long time ago with no practical application for today (G. Johnston 54). This factor means that, “[o]ne task of the biblical communicator will be just getting people to take the Bible seriously again” (54). Obviously, in this environment, preachers must have a high view of the Bible. No one can expect the culture to take the Bible seriously if preachers do not take it seriously. However, this high view of the Bible needs balance. Authority is rooted in God

and not the speaker. A Spirit-filled preacher will exude confidence in the Word of God while not drawing attention away from Scripture through false forms of authority in presentation such as manipulation, deception, and authoritarianism. Only a Spirit-filled preacher can walk that line.

The ninth characteristic is another positive reaction against the Enlightenment and modernism. Postmoderns hunger for and embrace community. G. Johnston says, “Postmodernity hasn’t jettisoned the value of the individual; however, a deep longing for community has begun to surface” (54). This value has occurred as a direct response of the elevation of the individual by modernity. As a result of radical individualism, “[p]ostmodernity comes with a generation that has grown up in broken homes, been lied to by politicians, and deceived by church and community leaders” (55). Traditional Wesleyanism emphasizes classes, societies, and bands for support and accountability. Finding a way to facilitate these kinds of communal opportunities in the preaching of the Word is a wide open door for today’s context.

Lastly, postmoderns, like their modern ancestors, embrace the material world. However, this characteristic takes on a different among postmoderns. David Cook says, “Generation X seems at one level genuinely and thoroughly materialistic (wanting) things and the pleasure that things bring.... What once would have been regarded as luxuries (entertainment systems, computer games) are now viewed as necessities of life” (9). Though different in expression, postmdoderns are as materialistic as their modern ancestors.

However, due to the cynical view of the postmodern, this generation takes an “eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow you die mentality” because this moment is the only one

that matters. The lack of an overall metanarrative for life breeds a pessimistic and cavalier attitude toward life. Their attitude tends to be, “The only world is today—now. Time is just a series of ‘now’ events that have no order or meaning. They are essentially chaotic” (G. Johnston 58). For this reason, pleasure seeking is one avenue in their quest for meaning, but along with this approach comes the need for options. The adrenaline junkies are constantly seeking the bigger rush. G. Johnston explains, “With this pursuit come new experiences such as snowboarding, mountain biking, base jumping, bungee jumping, and sky surfing” (58). As a result, postmoderns have a much shorter attention span. The preacher will have to be sensitive and aware of this inability to concentrate in their preaching. He or she will have to strive for conciseness or be very, very interesting. However, people still strive for meaning, and the effective pastor-preacher will find ways to show how Jesus can bring meaning in life. The pastor who can orient his or her flock to find a unique metanarrative within a gospel metanarrative will go a long way in helping this generation discover God’s adventure for their lives.

The Impact of Postmodernism on Nazarene Theology in the Twentieth Century

As the modernist philosophy influences American holiness preaching in the nineteenth century, postmodern philosophy affects Nazarene views of holiness in the twentieth century. The *substantialists* and the *relationalists* strive for the right rhythm and meter in this time of change. However, by emphasizing their own beat, Nazarenes find themselves unable to create beautiful music together.

Further complicating the issue today, postmoderns are a splintered group of people. *Post-Christian* may better define the current generation. However, the postmodern *ethos* exists in varying levels in today’s post-Christian culture. The meter and

rhythm provided by a Wesleyan theological interpretation of Scripture combined with the sense of mission of the American holiness leaders can work together to help give this postmodern or post-Christian world a wonderful alternative of holiness living, or Christlikeness, that will breathe new beauty and spontaneity into their everyday lives. Nazarene leaders need to rediscover the biblical message of Christlikeness from the Wesleyan viewpoint combined with a reinvigorated early Nazarene *pathos* in order to sing *Holiness unto the Lord* again in a vibrant and attractive way for this generation.

Preaching Christlikeness in a Way That Connects with Postmoderns

This project intended to gauge changes that occurred in beliefs and practices of Christlike living through a six-week sermon series entitled God's Grand Design for Your Life at the Southwest campus of Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene. The series was Wesleyan in flavor. I preached on entire sanctification clearly within the framework of the Wesleyan *ordo salutis*. Using this series, I monitored changes that occurred in beliefs and practices of Christlike living through the PSQ and DCQ administered before and after the series, respectively. Both instruments asked the same questions allowing quantitative analysis in this area. As a secondary benefit of the project, I used the DBPFG in an attempt to discern, not only what changes occurred, but also if any of the preaching practices helped to facilitate those changes. The principles listed in this section guided me in the development of the sermon series.

Rediscovering the Wesleyan Middle Way

The Nazarene disagreements of the twentieth century are only one facet of the difficulties facing Nazarenes today. While preachers of the American holiness movement did make mistakes, the pioneers of holiness in America get a lot more right than they do

wrong. In fact, they are much more faithful in propagating Wesley's doctrine than many of his Methodist descendants in America are.

Admittedly, these are radical words in some circles. Douglas M. Strong says, "In the process of reclaiming Wesley, Outler and other scholars judged the nineteenth-century American articulation of the Wesleyan message to be inadequate" (13). He goes on to say, "One of the speakers at a recent Wesleyan Theological Society meeting, for example, called on us to 'rid ourselves of the exclusively Western, nineteenth-century, now lifeless concept of holiness'" (14). In his address from the Wesleyan Theological Society in 1999, Strong concedes the errors of the American holiness movement:

The problems with the nineteenth century are easily identifiable. Optimism could lead to a liberal stress on human sufficiency; decisionism could lead to Pelagianism; experiential immediacy could lead to emotional fanaticism; moral earnestness could lead to legalism; and inclusive fellowship could lead to sectarian separatism. (19)

However, he also believes the American holiness movement has positive lessons to give for holiness adherents today (15).

Strong says, "Holiness men and women expressed an ethos, a vision, a 'distinctive spirituality' which can benefit the heirs of the Wesleyan movement today" (19). He describes the *ethos* as a sanctified eccentricity. He finds this phrase in the biography of a little known preacher, Cary Allen. An accusation of being eccentric was a badge of honor among those who saw themselves as challengers of the existing structures in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (19). Strong goes on to say, "Eccentrics were deliberately contrasting themselves with the polished mores and religious sophistication of genteel culture—values that represented the privileges only available to a few" (19). As Methodists, for example, become more affluent and refined,

holiness people became more countercultural and eccentric (20). One contemporary observer noted that the disheveled appearance of a holiness preacher was not the result of careless slovenliness, but rather exhibited his desire to be “independent from the changeable fashions of this age of superfluities” (20.) Holiness men and women were resisting enculturation, even if misguided at times.

Arguments about the specifics of certain practices are possible, but these early pioneers of holiness in America possessed a sense of mission that has been missing for some time. As with any movement, excesses and errors occurred. However, many among this nineteenth century cloud of witnesses possessed a deep, intimate relationship with God and have a positive impact on their society. These holiness people also played a major role in abolition, temperance, and the rights of women in line with Wesley’s approach of tackling social ills.

The frontier spirit of these early progenitors of holiness can have a significant impact in holiness circles today. While postmoderns are suspicious of any claims of truth, they value authenticity and people of conviction just as much as, if not more, than people of every generation do. Only as holiness leaders offer a model of a loving, inclusive, alternative community, with a lifestyle centered in the message of Christlikeness, can the message of holiness have any credibility with postmoderns.

Some mistakes do need correction, however. The adaptation of Finney’s approaches, Palmer’s virtual name it-claim it theology, the deprecation of the new birth, and the overemphasis on the second crisis work of entire sanctification are some of the most serious adaptations leaders of the American holiness made regarding Wesley’s theology and preaching. The root of these mistakes is that the American holiness

movement overemphasized entire sanctification at the expense of the new birth and justification. Given the belief that entire sanctification only requires consecration and faith, all new converts became candidates for entire sanctification as soon as possible after their new birth. J. A. Wood, throughout his book, refers to those who had been justified as the “merely justified” (Wood 204-05). Wesley would have never referred to someone as “merely justified.” Justification by faith is the bedrock of Wesley’s *ordo salutis*. In fact, what many today call the results of entire sanctification Wesley saw occurring in justification and regeneration. Nazarenes need to restore the importance of justification in their *ordo salutis*.

Furthermore, Wesley gives much more room for process than his American holiness descendants did. The crisis of entire sanctification was the keynote of the American holiness movement. Recently, the pendulum is swinging on the process side of the equation again. The key to resolving these tensions is to recover not just the methods of Wesley the Methodist but the spirit of the first Methodist, as well. The Anglican conjunctive theologian had a profound ability for holding great, and at times, seemingly contradictory doctrine, in great tension and balance. Wesley held the crisis and process in balance, unlike his American holiness descendants. Today, however, many emphasize process over crisis. For Wesley, both are critical. Growth precedes and follows the crisis of entire sanctification.

Tied with this issue of entire sanctification is the issue of *secondness*. General Superintendent Jim L. Bond, addressing the Global Theological Conference in 2002, gave an impassioned plea for Nazarenes to recover the idea of *secondness* or *subsequentness* in the experience of entire sanctification (3). T. A. Noble in the endnote

address says, “In all of Wesley’s voluminous writings (I checked this with Wesley scholar Dr. Herbert McGonigle) there are only four occurrences of the phrase ‘the second blessing’” (2). Noble then goes on to give positive examples of how Wesley identified this experience:

“That was just not how he characteristically referred to it. But the terms he used again and again and again and again were “perfect love,” “loving God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength,” “purity of heart,” “walking as Christ walked,” “the single eye,” “purity of intention,” love excluding sin.” (2-3)

All Nazarenes can agree on the substance. Arguing over words that are not even in the Bible is not necessary. Noble offered this solution in his address: “However, we have to say that ‘subsequence’ is built into that, and I suggest that ‘subsequent’ (the word which appears in Article X) is a more appropriate word than ‘second’” (3). In the Wesleyan spirit, arguments over non-biblical words are not necessary. Those who promote perfect love ought to be inclusive. Even Wesley does not give a clear account of his experience of entire sanctification. In Carl Bangs’ work, the author describes two experiences that many proponents of entire sanctification would call the crisis of entire sanctification. Wesley is firm on the substance of entire sanctification and seems to leave room for flexibility on its circumstance. Some will call this work the baptism of the Holy Spirit; others a deeper work; others a second work of grace; and others a cleansing work subsequent to their new birth. The spirit of Wesleyan theology leaves plenty of latitude regarding the circumstance of entire sanctification. This spirit will go a long way in helping develop a clear, coherent, life-changing message for any age.

The other area of disagreement revolves around those who favor a substantial definition of entire sanctification over a relational definition. Words such as *Christlike*,

love, and *relationships* have been more prevalent in recent years. In the first half of the twentieth century, Nazarenes emphasized words such as *purity*, *separation*, and *eradication*. Roger L. Hahn, at the Global Nazarene Theological Conference, delivered a paper arguing for more emphasis in holiness teaching and preaching regarding the *substantialist* content of teaching on Christlikeness. Jan Lanham agrees in her response that recent discussions tend toward words such as Christlikeness, progress, and growth in a relational context because such words connect more fully with today's congregations (1). Lanham is not against *substantialist* language but does convincingly argue that the preacher who uses these analogies bears the responsibility for describing this language in today's context (1).

Again, Wesley does not fit well into either of these categories alone. As noted, he constantly puts the emphasis on loving God and neighbor as the essence of holiness. However, he puts the emphasis on purity, as well. In his sermon "On Sin in Believers," he writes, "The sum of all is this: There are in every person, even after he is justified, two contrary principles, nature and grace, termed by St. Paul, the flesh and the Spirit" (*Works* 5: 155). Certainly, sin is not a substance that God removes from inside a believer. However, many believers still struggle with double-mindedness, self-centeredness, pride, and unbelief, which only a deeper work of God after new birth can accomplish. The requirement for a subsequent or deeper work is not due to God's inability to deal with sin in humans. Humans generally need time for spiritual maturation to see the need for a deeper work, hence opening up the opportunity for subsequent of deeper cleansing in the life the believer.

Wesley himself is unknowingly the cause of a lot of the confusion regarding these issues. He writes voluminously, often like Paul, regarding specific situations. As cultists can prove certain tenets of their faith by reading pieces of Scripture in isolation from the rest of the Bible, researchers can find some basis for many different Wesleyan positions. One reason for this possibility is his conjunctive abilities as a theologian that enables him to keep seemingly contradictory doctrines in balance, instead of forcing them against each other as many of his descendants do today. One group emphasizes the substantial over the relational side of the equation while another group emphasizes the relational over the substantial. In order to portray a clear message of holiness in postmodern times, the first step will be to reclaim the balance that Wesley finds in his day. A balanced message today will emphasize a deeper cleansing in the life of a believer that results in a life ruled by the love of God and a love for others. This message will attract postmoderns if spoken in a way that empowers them to build harmonious relationships in their lives and the world around them. In addition, postmoderns will be more adept at balancing ideas in tension than their modernist ancestors who require logic and precision because they embrace mystery more than their modernist ancestors. Nazarene preachers in the Wesleyan-holiness stream will do well to fine-tune their holiness message according to Wesleyan constructions while retaining the *ethos* and *pathos* of the American holiness pioneers of the nineteenth century.

Reimagining the Mystery of Salvation

Wesley lives with one foot in the premodern world and the other in the modern world of his time. In fact, he probably is more comfortable with the premodern than the modern one. Wesley regularly claims he preached the same message for over half a

century of preaching. In the big picture, this assertion is true. However, Wesley remains a bit of an enigma. The man who strongly believes in a subsequent work of entire sanctification never tells of his own experience of entire sanctification. His pastoral nature and openness to mystery in salvation keeps him from developing an empirical approach of salvation, even though he definitely has an *ordo salutis*.

At times Wesley does seemingly contradict himself. For instance, he writes in some places that entire sanctification typically occurs right before death (Oden 261). However, in his studies of the revival in the 1760s, he reports great increases in the numbers of those entirely sanctified. He writes, “I carefully examined most of these myself; and in London alone I found six hundred and fifty-two members of our society who were exceedingly clear in their experience, and of whose testimony I could see no reason to doubt” (*Works* 11: 491). He clearly states here that these people experience sanctification well before the moment of death. He goes on to say, “I believe no year has passed since that time wherein God has not wrought the same work in many others; but sometimes in one part of England or Ireland, sometimes in another-as the wind bloweth where it listeth” (491). Again, he clearly says these people experience entire sanctification well before death. The imagery of the wind is also illuminating. This language highlights Wesley’s openness to mystery in his order of salvation. His order of salvation is open to the sovereign working of God in the lives of individual believers according to his sovereign will.

Several issues are important regarding his openness toward the sovereignty of God. First, Wesley seems flexible regarding the circumstance of entire sanctification in the life of the believer. Secondly, his belief in an instantaneous change is very clear.

Next, he is able to be patient with his people because he is keenly aware that God works in mysterious ways. Wesley gives a lengthy discourse on the mysterious ways of God in entire sanctification in his sermon “The Imperfection of Knowledge”:

We know not why he bestows this on some even before they ask for it; (some unquestionable instances of which we have seen;) on some after they have sought it but a few days; and yet permits other believers to wait for it perhaps twenty, thirty, or forty years; nay, and others, till a few hours, or even minutes, before their spirits return to him.... Once more: some of those who are enabled to love God with all their heart and with all their soul, retain the same blessing, without any interruption, till they are carried to Abraham’s bosom; others do not retain it, although they are not conscious of having grieved the Holy Spirit of God. This also we do not understand: We do not herein “know the mind of the Spirit.” (*Works* 2: 488)

Wesley is well aware that God’s ways are different from the ways of people.

Last, Wesley the pastor also understands the nature of men and women. Randy L. Maddox says Wesley embraced an affectional moral psychology (40). For Wesley, the will encompasses an inclusive term for the various affections (40). The affections are more than feelings (“Reconnecting the Means”, 40). Maddox goes on to say, “They are the indispensable motivating inclinations behind human action. In their ideal expression they integrate the rational and emotional dimensions of human life into holistic inclinations toward action (like love)” (“Reconnecting the Means” 40). Wesley understood that different people surrender at different times based on their personality and background.

Brennan Manning says, “For the Christian, the second journey begins between the ages of thirty and sixty and is often accompanied by a second call from the Lord Jesus Christ” (165). The Wesleyan language shines through in the phrase “the second journey” (165). He goes on to say, “The second call invites us to a time of serious reflection on the

nature and quality of our faith in the gospel of grace our hope in the new and not yet, and our love for God and people” (165). Manning uses very Wesleyan language when he says, “The second call is a summons to a deeper, more mature commitment of faith where the naiveté, first fervor, and untested idealism of the morning and first commitment have been seasoned with pain, rejection, failure, loneliness, and self-knowledge” (165). Manning’s language is very Wesleyan though he describes the experience with different words. Wesley’s theology is flexible and welcomes different words and explanations. He embraces humility before God and his ways. The postmodern preacher will benefit from this mind-set as well.

Wesley’s belief in the means of grace also evidences his comfort with mystery. The means of grace are channels for the Lord to confer grace upon the souls of people: “outward signs, words, or actions, ordained of God that are designed to be ordinary channels by which he might convey to men, preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace” (*Works* 5: 187). Wesley says the chief of these are private and corporate prayer, searching and meditating on Scripture, and receiving the Lord’s Supper. These means of grace are not ways to manipulate God but are only effective as long as they help toward the overall goal of religion, namely the love of God and others (188). They have no merit in and of themselves. They are simply a means of cooperating with God’s work in the life of the believer. God can work in his people in any way, but he has chosen these means. They are means of grace and not human attainment or virtue (200-01). Postmoderns can intuitively grasp the mystery of these means of grace because they more readily appreciate mystery than moderns do.

Another important aspect regarding the means of grace focuses on Wesley's embrace of community in his spiritual journey. From the beginning, meeting with the Oxford Club, he always valued spiritual friendships and relationships. The genius of his pastoral method was the development of societies, classes, and bands. Every member of a society had to be a member of a class, a small group of people meeting together for encouragement, prayer, and accountability. Postmoderns value community. A commitment to Wesley's communal spirit and practices is another point of contact with postmoderns today.

Wesley and Bresee also put a strong emphasis on helping the poor and less fortunate. Social justice and societal issues are part of their mandate. Whether the problem is the plight of the poor or temperance in nineteenth century America, these men believed Christians ought to leave the world better than they find it. These practices are not necessarily means of grace but are certainly areas of obedience that will promote and evidence spiritual development.

The natives of the postmodern world, those born after 1963, are much more at home with mystery than they are empirical process. The pastor-preacher who embraces humility in the face of the majesty and mystery of God will be able to connect well with postmoderns today. A humble, pastoral spirit that embraces mystery will be very helpful for the preacher seeking to be a missionary in the postmodern context.

Reclaiming the Role of Missionary/Preacher/Pastor

A key factor in Wesley's impact is his ability to bring the roles of missionary, preacher, and pastor together in seamless unity. John Doughty says 2 April 1739 is "[o]ne of the momentous dates in spiritual history not only of this country, but of the world!"

(36). Wesley speaks of this momentous day in his journal entry from Monday, 2 April 1739: “At four in the afternoon I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highway the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining the city (Bristol), to about three thousand people” (2: 172-73). This approach was a huge shift in approach for Wesley. His ministry spanned the next fifty years of which he traveled all over England, preaching wherever he could find an audience. He is willing to become all things for all people in order that he might reach some.

Wesley did not stop with field preaching, however. This fact is the major distinctive between Wesley and George Whitefield. Wesley’s legacy lives on because he developed a system of discipleship for his people. Whitefield did not, and his fruit faded away quickly. Wesley’s societies and classes provided a way for the missionary-pastor to preserve the fruit of his ministry.

Phineas Bresee, founder of the Church of the Nazarene, imbibed deeply of the Wesleyan spirit. He, too, eventually became unwelcome in the establishment church of his day because of his desire to minister among the poorest of the poor in Los Angeles. E. A. Girvin records that Bresee joined with eighty-five other people to launch the work of the Church of the Nazarene. Bresee began this work “with the declared purpose of preaching holiness, and carrying the gospel to the poor” (104). Initially, Bresee broke with Methodism over his desire to serve the poor against the wishes of his Methodist leaders. Only later did Bresee see the need of pastoral care for those attending camp meetings as an outlet for holiness preaching. As he traveled the country preaching at these meetings, he developed a burden for the people whom he sensed needed ongoing pastoral care. The camp meetings served as an outlet for holiness preaching, but they did

not go far enough. This factor became the impetus for forming the Nazarene denomination in 1908 with representatives from coast to coast across America as a means for spreading scriptural holiness.

Wesley and Bresee were model missionary pastors. They were willing to minister outside the official confines of the church, taking the ridicule that comes with that choice. Both of them went to where the people were rather than being content to preach within four walls of the church. Neither was willing to stop with only evangelistic decision. Wesley and Bresee desired to lead their followers on the journey of Christlike holiness. Wesley found a way to accomplish this goal within the denomination of his childhood. Bresee did so by forming a new denomination. Though they took different roads, they had the same goal.

The use of language is important to explore at this point, as well. Using the same words, as Wesley, Bresee, and those of earlier generations, demonstrates the need for today's holiness pastors-preachers to invest time in explaining those words to people who have never heard them before. However, given that the phrase *entire sanctification* is mentioned specifically only once in the Bible (1 Thes. 5:23) and eradication is not even the Bible, using language that people can understand today is a wise decision. Steve Seamands highlights a book, *They Found the Secret*, in which Raymond Edman presents the lives of twenty well-known late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century evangelicals who experienced a deeper move in their lives after their new birth. Edman mentions the likes of Samuel Logan Brengle, Oswald Chambers, Dwight Moody, and many more who described their experience in different ways:

Though they all came from different backgrounds and theological traditions, all went through a profound crisis of self-surrender several

years after their conversion—in most cases, after several years of ministry. Only after they had died to self at a deeper level did they enter into the Christ-controlled, Spirit-filled life ministry they are remembered for. (qtd. in Seamands 88)

The words *entire sanctification* and *entire consecration* are not used, but the reality of the experience is in these words. Postmoderns will surrender their lives under the leadership of Christ as they learn how Jesus desires the best for them. He can help them come to a place of self-acceptance through self-surrender. They can know inclusion in genuine Christian fellowship as they experience the inclusive love of God in their lives that enables them to love others. Missionary pastors of the twenty-first century will have to learn the postmodern dialect to be fully effective.

Pastors today will need to embrace a missionary mind-set. The Barna Group says that in 2007 America had one hundred million unchurched people. This number is equal with the twelfth largest nation on earth. Pastors in America must develop a missionary mind-set in order to reach the current postmodern mission field. American pastors must start asking the same kinds of contextualization questions that missionaries in Africa ask. Chris Altrick says, “Contextualization is simply understanding the cultural context and speaking the gospel in that context” (45). This concept is easy enough to accept, but he highlights the problem with many churches in America who are willing to accept this premise in foreign countries but are less receptive to practicing them in here at home. He concludes by saying that Christians in postmodern America need an approach for preaching that “speaks to postmoderns in their language, uses that language to challenge their unbiblical beliefs and behaviors, and trusts God to let the gospel be heard in spite of cultural barriers” (46). American pastors must become missionary pastors by preaching in ways that connect with and challenge the unbiblical values of their day.

Beville challenges preachers to become more cognizant of postmodern philosophy (16). However, he also warns against the danger of moving from contextualization to syncretism. He writes, “Syncretism occurs when Christian leaders adapt, either consciously or unconsciously, to the prevailing worldviews of their culture” (2). He believes many churches in America have crossed this line. Douglas Groothuis gives this caution regarding the danger of syncretism:

While Christian witness must be savvy concerning the realities of the postmodern condition in order to make the historic Christian message understandable and pertinent to denizens of the contemporary world, this does not mean that we should become postmodernists in the process. (253)

Christians of every generation must live in this tension.

Having given this caution, Beville goes on to offer a snapshot of the postmodern culture in which pastor-preachers live in today. He uses the research of Amy Mears and Charles Bugg to point out some of the unique needs of postmodern audiences, suggesting five that are often overlooked and bear special consideration in a postmodern context: “the need for acceptance,... the need for hope,... the need for ecological awareness,... the need for inclusion,... and the need for distinctiveness” (341). Awareness of these needs can guide the preacher in finding ways to present the gospel in ways that people can relate with today.

As with all worldly mind-sets though, pastors-preachers will have to confront the culture in love regarding beliefs and values that do not line up with biblical doctrine. Relativism, the rejection of any metanarrative, and the resulting individualistic ideology will have to be countered with the gospel and holiness teaching. These words of Paul can still guide preachers today: “For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18). The gospel calls for

repentance and not acquiescence with the culture. While communicating with relevant language is important, the goal is to preach the gospel in a way that saves people from sin and the world rather than making them more comfortable in the world.

In truth, Wesley and Bresee do not offer a communication strategy for today's Christian leaders. Rather, they model a missionary passion combined with a pastoral heart under the control of the Holy Spirit that enables them to embrace contextualization without falling into syncretism. Unfortunately, today there are those whose misunderstanding of cultural relevance shifts into a tendency toward syncretism, and the Christian mission of making Christlike disciples suffers. Approaching cultural relevance in a syncretistic way puts the receptor at the center of the picture instead of the message and implications of the cross. Today's missionary pastors, facing the same challenges as missionaries of every generation, can meet these challenges and avoid losing their focus with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Recovering a Wesleyan-Holiness *Hermeneutic* Metanarrative

One of the major tenets of postmodernism is the irrelevance of any idea of metanarrative. However, pastors-preachers can only go so far adapting with culture without adopting the beliefs and values of the culture around them. The missionary pastor in the Wesleyan-holiness stream will have to embrace a Wesleyan *hermeneutic* metanarrative if he or she will be successful in reaching this generation with a gospel that not only saves people from hell but also transforms them into the image of Christ in this life. The challenge is difficult on three fronts.

First, as has already been noted, the postmodern generation rejects all ideas of metanarrative. The missionary pastor, unlike Wesley and Bresee, will have to become

adept at apologetics. What David Jasper calls the hermeneutics of suspicion rules the day (63). Utilizing reason in Wesley's quadrilateral is not an option today. One could make the argument that an outright rejection of a metanarrative as a philosophy for life is in itself a metanarrative. The missionary pastor will have to engage in this kind of hermeneutical wrestling to be effective in today's postmodern culture.

The second challenge has to do with whether or not a Wesleyan hermeneutics is even possible. Wesley's hermeneutics certainly are not reproducible today. However, David F. Watson says, "Yet his apprehension of Scripture as nourishing, formative, and salvific continues to serve his heirs well in the twenty-first century" (Green and Watson 134). The spirit of Wesley can guide preachers still today.

The third front is a particular challenge for Nazarene pastors today. American holiness preachers in the early days of the denomination did not utilize all four legs of Wesley's quadrilateral. For Wesley, Scripture is always primary. Wesley says, "The foundation of true religion stands upon the oracles of God and it is reason that enables us to understand and explain them to ourselves and to others" (*Works* 2: 591-92). However, Wesley recognizes the danger of imperfect reasoning, and he uses experience to protect from the potential error that relying on reason alone could foster (McEwan 114). David B. McEwan like many others highlights the significant role of experience in Wesley's hermeneutics, homiletics, and theology:

If I were convinced that none in England had attained what has been so clearly and strongly preached by such a number of Preachers in so many places, and for so long a time, I should be clearly convinced that we had all mistaken the meaning of those scriptures; and therefore, for the time to come, I too must teach that 'sin will remain till death. (Wesley, *Works* 11: 405-06)

As important as experience is for Wesley, experience does not trump Scripture:

However, Christian experience is not self-authenticating and it needs criteria for evaluation, and this is where Scripture is essential. It is this symbiotic relationship between Scripture, reason, and specifically Christian experience that lies at the heart of his approach.” (*Letters* 6: 44)

The last leg of the stool is tradition. Wesley uses tradition as a guard against advocating some new doctrine. He particularly values the contributions of the early apostolic fathers because “we cannot therefore doubt but what they deliver to us is the pure doctrine of the gospel” (*Christian Library* 116). Wesley’s quadrilateral is a built-in check and balance mechanism to guard against false teaching.

Lennox examines the use of the Wesleyan quadrilateral by American holiness proponents. The comparison cannot be completely accurate since the nineteenth-century preachers were not aware of the quadrilateral in ways that contemporary holiness preachers are. However, his analysis gives keen insight into the differences between the leaders of the American holiness movement and Wesley.

Both Wesley and the American holiness movement agree on the inspiration of Scripture. However, the American holiness movement is reticent to embrace the validity of reason and tradition on a par with scripture. Lennox says, “The pejorative assessment of reason also arose, in part, from the populist hermeneutic, the predominant approach to the Bible among American Protestants from the Colonial period through the Civil War” (23). The emphasis at this time is on the ability of the common person to read, study, and preach Scripture. Despite these populist tendencies, the preachers demonstrated strong biblical knowledge and effective communication skills. Many of Bresee’s sermons demonstrate depth of knowledge and excellent rhetorical skills. Most importantly, God anointed the ministry of the nineteenth-century American holiness preachers, despite

their humanity, and helped them shape a nation in areas such as abolition, temperance, and the rights of women to vote (26). Not surprisingly, this deprecation of reason led to disdain for ancient tradition. “No creed but the Bible” becomes a common rallying cry in the nineteenth century American holiness movement (26).

These factors lead to a populist Biblicism in the nineteenth century that narrows the Wesleyan metanarrative into the crisis, second work of entire sanctification wrought by the Holy Spirit. In other words, the crisis, second work of entire sanctification becomes the hermeneutic lens that gives clarity for all of Scripture. Lennox writes, “One holiness author was complimented by his publisher for being able to find entire sanctification in many portions of the Old Testament where few people have ever thought to look for either the doctrine or the experience” (20). Nazarenes in the first half of the twentieth century interpreted Scripture through these lenses.

Mid-twentieth century, Taylor shifted this approach. Unlike the early pioneers who used a lot of typology and proof-texting, he makes use of the aorist tense of verbs in certain passages to give biblical proof for that which Wesley relied on experience for. A comprehensive analysis of several of these passages is impossible for this project.

Therefore, 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 will serve as an example:

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through.
May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of
our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

The word *sanctify* here is in the aorist tense. This tense for many holiness scholars implies crisis action achieved in the past. Given that the people addressed are already Christians and Paul’s earlier expressed desire to come and “supply what is lacking in their faith...” (1 Thess. 3:10), many holiness preachers use this passage to prove from

Scripture that God entirely sanctifies Christians in a moment after their new birth.

However, this interpretation is less than universally accepted in Nazarene circles.

Maddox argues against overemphasis on the use of the aorist tense. He argues against the assumption that the present tense is the ground tense in the literature of the Greek New Testament and that the ground tense is actually the aorist tense:

As I see it, the aorist preserved the simple action and the other tenses grew up around it. It is true that in the expression of past time in the indicative and with all the other moods, the aorist is the tense used as a matter of course, unless there was special reason for using some other tense. (“Use” 107)

If this analysis is true, using the aorist tense as a major argument for a second crisis work after new birth is in jeopardy.

Nazarenes also debate the best way to interpret this passage and other passages like this one as well. Cubie is one of those who offers an alternative explanation of this passage:

Sanctification occurs in three stages: (1) initial sanctification, concomitant with the new birth (1 Cor. 1:2; see 2 Peter 1:4), (2) equipping sanctification (John 17:17) concomitant with the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and (3) entire sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23), concomitant with Christlikeness (Rom. 8:29; 1 John 3:2, 4:17). This last stage is the goal of the Christian, promised by God (1 Thess. 5:24). (“Entire Sanctification” 159-60)

He leans toward seeing entire sanctification as occurring at the point of glorification or, at best, right before death.

Andy Johnson, professor of New Testament at Trevecca Nazarene University, asks, “[I]s using the hermeneutical lens of ‘secondness’ and ‘instantaneousness’ the only faithful way for a *community* to read NT texts that facilitates a context in which God can shape that community into a holy community?” (1). In context, Johnson believes “Paul’s

desire is that his audience will continue some of their current concrete practices (acts of love) and increase them and continue avoiding others ... that threaten the holiness/sanctification of the community” (3). Progressive sanctification holds the day with Johnson.

No less than General Superintendent Middendorf responds to this paper. Middendorf agrees that the Nazarene approach is not the only way to interpret this passage. Using Wesley’s quadrilateral though, he goes on to say, “However, experience seems to indicate that for many people, the language of secondness and instantaneousness is vital to both comprehending and appropriating the provisions of grace that make such holiness of character possible” (1). Next, he utilizes Wesley’s order of salvation when he says, “For the Wesleyan/Arminian, the pursuit of holiness is not a desirable option or a means to spiritual advantage, but is a part of the order of salvation” (1). Lastly, he beautifully weaves in the Wesleyan metanarrative based on the Wesleyan quadrilateral:

The reason we are prone to find the idea of “secondness” in a variety of passages is our deep conviction, born of both experience and our understanding of the wider scope of scripture, that the very nature of redemption for humankind demands it. (1)

Based on this analysis, Middendorf believes the traditional Nazarene interpretation is effective for those in the Wesleyan-Holiness stream.

Middendorf’s hermeneutics are exemplary. His utilization of the Wesley order of salvation is sound. Calling on Wesley’s analogy of faith is key:

Critical to his understanding was this idea of the “analogy of faith,” which in the Notes (NT) on Rom. 12:6 he described as “the general tenor” of the whole of the Bible understood through a soteriological framework of original sin, justification by faith, and present, inward salvation. (McEwan 112)

Last, Middendorf embraces a hermeneutical humility that is crucial in the postmodern context. In an age where the hermeneutics of suspicion reigns supreme and all authority is suspect, a humble approach is a wise approach. In addition, embracing Wesley's emphasis on experience is helpful within the current postmodern context. Individualism is a major tenet of the current generation, and the experience of others may influence some of the reality of Christlikeness. However, they may write off another person's experience as their own and deny the need for someone else's experience in their own lives. Therefore, a hermeneutics of humility, within the framework of the Wesleyan quadrilateral and grounded in the Wesleyan order of salvation and analogy of faith can provide a clear hermeneutic lens for Wesleyan-Holiness preachers in the twenty-first century context.

Reclaiming a Wesleyan-Holiness *Homiletic* Metanarrative

Wesleyan-holiness pastors-preachers must also reclaim a *homiletical* metanarrative in the twenty-first century. The practical application will be different in different contexts. Some pastors will need to bring balance where an overemphasis on crisis clouds the need for ongoing growth. Others will find themselves needing to deal with an overemphasis on a *substantialist* understanding of Christlikeness. Some congregations are ignorant of even the basics concerning holiness teaching and will need to start from the beginning. Probably, every pastor will have some of all these emphases in their pastoral context but usually one of these will predominate. The pastor will need to discern where the congregation stands and approach the situation accordingly. At the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene, a small segment of the congregation leans toward the American holiness understanding. However, the largest

segment is probably ignorant of a cohesive, clear message of what holiness, or Christlike living, entails. A balanced approach cast in the terms of love will be the most advantageous means at this campus. Understanding the context is the first step in developing a cohesive plan for leading people in the journey of Christlikeness.

Once a preacher understands the context, other more practical issues need to be addressed. In preaching, issues of rhetoric are important at a certain level today. The goal of preaching is persuasion. Therefore, the rules of rhetoric prove helpful in preaching: the argument (*logos*), the perceived character (*ethos*) of the orator, the emotion (*pathos*) aroused by the speaker (Osborne 59). All factors under the influence of the Holy Spirit play a role in communication that creates life change in a person.

As far as issues of rhetoric go, style or *pathos* matters but is the least important of the homiletical issues. Wesley has a much more refined style of preaching than Asbury or Bresee. Girvin says Bresee thoroughly prepares his sermons. His eloquence is of a high type and so fiery and impetuous at times that his hearers are often almost swept away by it (368). All preachers will have a different style and must discover their own voice. The issue is not the style chosen as much as authenticity. Postmoderns value authenticity.

Effective preaching that results in persuasion requires genuine character in the life of the preacher. Aristotle would use the word *ethos* to convey this aspect of rhetoric. J. Elsworth Kalas says, "Soul preaching happens when the speaker seeks to deliver not only a message, but his or her own soul, and to deliver it in such a way that it reaches to the soul of the hearer" (10). Great preaching flows out of great souls. Therefore, the effective preacher will first focus on growing a great soul in quiet time alone with God. The pastor who takes soul care seriously will fully immerse himself or herself in what Wesley calls

the means of grace. Minimally, regular time in prayer and the Word of God are critical in the practice of soul care.

Wayne McCown says Wesley must have read the Old and New Testaments several times in his lifetime (2-3). Obviously, this time in the Word makes the language of Scripture the native language for Wesley. McCown says, “Wesley himself became a ‘living Bible’” (3). Wesley obviously holds a high view of Scripture.

Hermeneutical humility, however, does not require a low view of Scripture. Pastors can be confident in the Word of God while remaining humble in their approach with people. In fact, the higher the view of Scripture a pastor possesses will be directly proportionate with their humility of approach. McCown says, “[I]n accord with our Wesleyan heritage, hermeneutics embraces both our studied examination of the text and its searching scrutiny of us” (5). The preacher who allows the text to scrutinize his or her life will have no problem approaching their listeners with humility. Personal time in the Bible and in prayer is essential for effective preaching.

Last, preachers must give attention to the *logos* or arrangement of the argument of the speech. For effective pastors in the postmodern context, this process begins before writing an individual sermon. Wesley seemed to have an overall plan for preaching. Doughty says, “As we read the Sermons and the many references in the *Journal* to Wesley’s subjects and texts, we notice that they fall conveniently into three broad classes” (84). A solid Wesleyan *homiletical* plan of preaching will encompass all three of these categories. Doughty says the first class of subjects is “the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith” (84). He says, “They are based first, upon Scripture, and then, for the most part, verifiable in experience” (84). These fundamental doctrines include salvation

by faith, Christian assurance, and sanctification, which he variously refers to as “Christian perfection,” “holiness,” and “Perfect Love” (85). The second class of subjects regards areas of speculative theology. These are areas of doctrine affirmed in the creeds but not necessarily specifically mentioned in Scripture. They include topics such as the Trinity, the person and work of Christ, the nature of the atonement, and heaven and hell (86). The third class includes miscellaneous subjects, dealing with matters of morals, expedience, and general decency (87). This last class of sermons tends to deal with daily issues of Christlike living. No subject is out of bounds for Wesley. He addresses everything from money to giving guidance on how much a person should sleep. The effective Wesleyan-holiness preacher today will have to preach for crisis decision but also teach biblical illiterates and former pagans the basics of faith and Christlike living.

James W. Thompson calls this kind of preaching *paraklesis*. In 1 Thessalonians 2:3, Paul says, “For the appeal we make does not spring from error or impure motives, nor are we trying to trick you.” The Greek word for *appeal* is *paraklesis*. *Parakleo* is one of those Greek words that is hard to translate into English. The root word *parakaleo* carries the meaning of “entreat,” “challenge,” and “encourage” (55).

Thompson says understanding Paul’s appeal encompasses both the announcement of the good news and the continuing summons to obey its demand. The work of the evangelist and pastor come together in this one rich word. Thompson also says, “Paul portrays continued evangelistic preaching as leading inevitably to pastoral work” (59). Pastors must not be content with simply leading people to make decisions about Christ but must also be prepared to lead new followers on the long journey of Christlikeness. Thompson goes on to say, “[T]he missing dimension in the contemporary understanding of

preaching is this dialectical relationship between evangelistic and pastoral preaching”

(59). Evangelism and discipleship belong together.

Jesus commissioned his followers to go and make more followers. Evangelism is the first part of discipleship. The process of evangelism should automatically lead a person into the process of sanctification and later crisis of entire sanctification. Pastors who understand preaching as the means of calling people to embrace the long journey of Christlikeness will find calling people to take up the cross much easier than those who try to separate evangelism and discipleship.

Remembering this overall goal will help a pastor in developing a preaching schedule. A Wesleyan-holiness preacher today needs a plan guided by holiness hermeneutics and a homiletic metanarrative. At Southwest, a sermon series entitled God’s Grand Design for Your Life was the tool used to give a brand new introduction of the privilege and possibility of Christlike living. Outside of this series, a new preaching plan aimed at developing a holistic approach to the development of Christlike disciples is crucial for the long term. The key categories for a year of preaching will be composed of the church calendar, church vision and mission series’, seeker series’ designed to call people to enter into the crisis point of new birth and entire sanctification, and the use of different biblical genres designed to spur people on to the basics of Christlike living. The lens for guiding this process will be a metanarrative of Christlikeness. Each sermon and series will have the goal of helping Christians adopt a Christ-centered worldview that produces Christlike attitudes and responses in daily life.

A discussion of homiletical form is necessary as well. Many advocate the narrative approach as best for reaching this generation. Lowery, Buttrick, and Craddock

champion this approach as a reaction against the modern deductive approach to preaching (Thompson 7). Thompson, however, believes this approach has become less effective given the rise in biblical illiteracy in the culture (9).

John Stott make a strong case for expository preaching. John Stott says, “It is our conviction that all true Christian preaching is expository preaching” (125). One of the strengths of expository preaching is that this form takes seriously the text of Scripture. As well, basing the sermon on Scripture with integrity requires giving adequate reflection on the form and genre of Scripture as a guide for the form the sermon. Haddon W.

Robinson’s approach of inductive expository preaching may be effective in the current postmodern context. He writes, “Induction is particularly effective with indifferent or hostile audiences likely to reject a preacher’s proposition were it presented early in the sermon” (127). Postmoderns definitely fit this description. Ralph L. and Gregg Lewis say, “An inductive sermon is one that starts where the people are, with particular elements—the narrative, dialogue, analogy, questions, parables, the concrete experiences—and then leads to general conclusions” (43). The genius of this approach is that “[i]nductive preaching allows them to arrive at the truth without feeling that some proposition has been imposed on them from an authority figure” (45). The inductive, expository sermon approaches postmoderns with homiletic humility. The listener becomes a meaningful part of the process in this approach. While other approaches can work, this one does seem like an effective way to approach postmoderns with the truths of Scripture.

However, this approach is not the only one that will work. Deductive sermons can be effective when introducing new subjects to audiences who might be skeptical of the

Bible. Textual expository sermons will be necessary to deal with issues of practical living. Wesley himself uses a topical approach in his preaching. However, his approach is very biblical because he grounds the preaching in the analogy of faith and his *ordo salutis*. The missionary-pastor must know the congregation and community context in order to discern the most effective methods.

Thomas G. Long offers a strong caution regarding *homiletical* forms. He says, “In short, the gospel is too rich, complex, and varied to be proclaimed through a single sermon form” (131). This advice carries a lot of wisdom. Form is not value neutral in preaching. Long notes the impact of form on sermon:

The implicit hope is that if only we could find the perfect glass slipper of form, not only would the sermon be transformed into a beautiful princess, but we ourselves would be transformed. Some would understand rhetoric as the natural ally of homiletics. But when rhetoric is accompanied by an implicit anthropology, as it always is, it poses a danger to homiletics. Homiletics then finds itself in crisis in that it takes its cues from principles not its own. (*The Witness of Preaching* 69)

This problem raises profound issues. Long says, “[I]f we look to the culture to tell us what forms our sermons must assume, then, like it or not, we will end up preaching the culture instead of the gospel” (135). The issue becomes discerning the correct way to determine the form of the sermon because the form does matter.

Lischer notes, “[T]he church has moved from form to form.... No form of sermon has proven normative—only the rhetorical situation remains” (70). The preacher has to hear from God regarding the proper subject, form, and purpose of the message for the people who will hear a specific message in a specific situation for a specific day. Long says, “A good sermon form, then, grows out of the particularities of preaching this truthful word on this day to these people” (136). Preaching is an event in time for a

specific purpose. Much of the emphasis on preaching today forgets the supernatural element in preaching, opting for a lot of discussion on techniques.

Another weakness of preaching today is that much emphasis on preaching is largely a mental exercise. Preachers are conveyors of information instead of agents of transformation. Long offers excellent advice on this issue as well. He emphasizes that a sermon must have a subject or a major idea. However, too many sermons stop at this point. Sermons also have a function (108). He calls the major idea the focus. Before deciding on form, the preacher must determine the focus and function of the sermon. He says, “The form of the sermon is simply the sequence of steps hearers need to make to move from here to there” (137). His *homiletical* guidance offers help for preachers in any context by reminding them that every sermon has a purpose, and this purpose is one of the major factors determining the form of the sermon.

Lastly, regarding *homiletical* practices, volumes of material are available on introductions and conclusions, stories and illustrations, humor, and the proper length of a sermon. Preachers can learn helpful tools from these kinds of studies. Story and metaphor are powerful ways of connecting with people today. In a DVR society, people do not like to waste time, so conciseness is very helpful in most contexts. Being abreast of these kinds of issues is helpful. However, a missing subject in homiletics has to do with the preparation of the preacher.

The Preparation of the Preacher

Dennis Kinlaw says, “The greatest problem in preaching is not the preparation of the sermon but the preparation of the preacher” (17). Interestingly, recent works on preaching emphasize the mechanics of preaching a lot more than they do this aspect of

the preparation of the preacher. Older works on preaching seem to highlight this critical aspect more than current literature does. The lack of emphasis in this area is indicative of the lack of effectiveness of churches in America.

The Spiritual Nature of Preaching

In preaching, like everything else, beginning with the end in mind is critical. Oswald Chambers offers keen insight into the goal of preaching.. In Acts 26:18 Paul describes the purpose of his ministry to Agrippa when he testified that God called him “to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.” Chambers says, “Our part as workers for God is to open men’s eyes that they may turn from darkness to light; but that is not salvation, that is conversion—the effort of a roused human being” (10). While this aspect is a part of the process of a person coming to Christ, the person thus far roused is not yet born again. Chambers says, “Conversion is not regeneration... When a man is born again, he knows that it is because he has received something as gift from Almighty God and not because of his own decision” (10). The tragedy is that even in the days of Chambers this view of new birth was characteristic of Christianity. Chambers says, “I do not think it is too sweeping to say that the majority of nominal Christians are of this order; their eyes are opened, but they have received nothing” (10). Salvation requires a divine work in which a person is forgiven and changed. Chambers goes on to say, “Then there follows the second mighty work of grace—‘and inheritance among them which are sanctified’” (10). Human-based preaching can only produce human results. As Jesus says, “The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the

Spirit and life” (John 6:67). The kind of spiritual fruit Chambers describes requires spiritual work that only spiritual assistance can produce.

Spiritual work also involves spiritual warfare. Paul says in Ephesians 6:12, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” In 2 Corinthians 4:4 Paul says, “The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.” Paul understands that spiritual work will bring spiritual warfare. Satan does not want preachers to achieve their goals. Therefore, the preacher needs spiritual assistance in this battle against the spiritual forces of evil. Thankfully, God does not send his workers into the battle alone or unprepared.

Two Critical Helps for the Preacher

The first critical help for the preacher of all generations is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is active at several levels in the life of the preacher and the preaching event. Kinlaw writes, “As I read the biblical biographies of mighty preachers, I’m convinced that ultimately there is no great preaching unless the preacher partakes of the divine nature in some measure” (18). Only a Spirit-filled preacher can achieve spiritual results. The Old Testament concept of anointing lays the groundwork for this spiritual truth:

Each major office in the life of Israel was to be filled by someone anointed by the Holy Spirit. The priest and king always began their work by being anointed with olive oil, which is symbolic of the Spirit of God. (93)

Jesus did not begin his ministry until the Holy Spirit came upon him at his baptism. The disciples waited in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit came upon them before they went out to preach. Preachers today need the same baptism of the Holy Spirit to be effective.

Tied in with this issue is the importance of Christlike character in the life of the preacher. Preachers have to exemplify what they preach. E. M. Bounds says the lack of Christlike living is one of the causes for ineffective preaching: “The difficulty may lie with the preacher himself, should his outward conduct be out of harmony with the rule of Scripture and his own profession” (421). Those filled with the Spirit of Christ will live out the life of Christ. If preachers do not live what they preach, this lack of credibility will harm their efforts by blocking the blessing of the Lord on their ministry.

This spiritual power is critical in the life of the preacher. Alex Montoya gives practical guidance to help the preacher in this critical area of effective preaching. He begins by describing how many preachers today try to cover up lifeless preaching with a lot of techniques and technology. However, “[a]rtificial elements do not give life to a dead sermon offered by a preacher devoid of the Spirit” (23). Without the Spirit, no spiritual fruit is possible.

Montoya offers six requirements for spiritual power. First, he emphasizes the need for contrition of soul. He says, “Spiritual power comes when we realize our utter unworthiness to preach and our total dependence on God for *everything*” (original emphasis 24). He does not advocate a ministerial low self-esteem. Montoya has in mind here the kind of humility Isaiah experienced when he had his vision of God in Isaiah 6. A sense of unworthiness and complete dependence on God is essential for effective preaching.

Next, Montoya emphasized the need for confession of sin. Preachers must “...keep short accounts with God” (26). Furthermore, Montoya adds, “The pulpit can be a great help in keeping us from habitual sin if we acknowledge its sanctity and the need for

personal holiness as a requirement for our entrance into it to declare God's Word" (27). The sense of contrition will lend support in keeping short accounts with God. Preachers who live with a sense of awe for God and their calling to serve him will have a weekly reminder of their need for God's grace each step of the way in their sermon preparation and delivery.

Additionally, these two practices will help preachers maintain communion with God, of which Montoya says is the third habit of those who preach with spiritual power. He says, "Holiness must be maintained through a constant and living communion with God" (27). Jesus told his disciples to remain in him as a branch remains in the vine if they wanted to bear fruit. Preachers must live in and out of a life of continual communion with God. Montoya lists some practical helps for this lifestyle, such as reading Scriptures, meditating on the Word of God, praying consistently, growing in love for the Savior, engaging in private and corporate worship, and practicing the discipline of fasting (31). These disciplines or means of grace can help facilitate a healthy communion with God when done for the right reason.

The fourth key for spiritual power is a sense of commission from the Holy Spirit. Montoya says, "Spiritual power comes when we understand that our ministries are not from men but from God. The preacher in some way needs to sense that God has called him to this sacred task. He can do no other" (31). Spiritual power exudes from those who know they are doing God's work because he has called them to do this specific work. This call is what keeps Christian workers in the fight when all is against them. Fifth, a sense of commission from the Holy Spirit will lead to a life controlled by the Holy Spirit. In and out of the pulpit, the preacher needs to live a life of Christlikeness so that in the

pulpit the anointing of the Holy Spirit can bring spiritual results from his or her preaching.

Lastly, spiritual power requires the consolation of the saints (36). Montoya uses this phrase to highlight the need for prayers from the congregation for the preacher. Pastor and congregation are in the fight together. Paul regularly requests prayer in his letter from those he served because he understood the need for the people to unleash power from heaven through corporate prayer. United praying speeds the work of the kingdom forward.

The preacher who stays connected with the Holy Spirit will have spiritual power throughout the whole preaching process. Kinlaw says, “When the Spirit’s internal revelation breaks into the preacher’s mind and attends his preaching, it has the potential for radically transforming people’s lives” (15). Revelation from the Lord is critical each step of the way from the study all the way through the delivery of the sermon. Again, spiritual life and results require the supernatural assistance of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is also working in the lives of the listeners during the sermon. Lischer writes, “Few have written extensively of the work of the Holy Spirit in preaching” (*Company* 362). A scan of the table of contents on many *homiletical* books will bear this truth out. Again, however, Kinlaw is helpful in this area as well. He writes, “We never preach to someone whose life God has not already been at work” (84). He labels this reality the law of the second witness, which says, “The preacher is never God’s first witness in the hearer’s life; God Himself is already at work there before the preacher” (81). The preacher is simply working in cooperation with the Holy Spirit.

However, this truth highlights even more the need for the preacher to stay in tune with the Holy Spirit.

The second tool on which the preacher has to rely is prayer. No substitute exists for the power of prayer in preaching:

Herein lies the great danger menacing the pulpit of today. All around us we see a tendency to substitute human gifts and worldly attainments for the supernatural, inward power which comes from on high in answer to earnest prayer. (Bounds 419)

Prayerless pulpits will always be powerless pulpits. For that reason, “[t]he great need of the hour is for good prayer-ers in the pulpit as well as good preachers” (411). The reality is that Jesus spent a lot more time teaching his disciples to pray than he does to preach. Bounds says, “It must be kept in mind that Christ taught the disciples more about praying than he did about preaching. Prayer was the great factor in the spreading of his gospel” (404). Bounds sounds like he is writing today when he writes about the need for prayer among America’s preachers:

Today, there is no dearth of preachers who deliver eloquent sermons on the need and nature of revival, and advance elaborate plans for the spread of the kingdom of God, but the praying preachers are far more rare and the greatest benefactor this age can have is a man who bring the preachers, the church and the people back to the practice of real praying. (405)

Preachers in this age must return to seeking God for a fresh empowerment in preaching. The supernatural work brings supernatural warfare. The work and the warfare require supernatural assistance that is only accessible through prayer. Preachers must recover the intimacy with God that is available through prayer. Without the supernatural assistance of the Holy Spirit and help from the Lord that comes through prayer, the preacher will not

be effective in this spiritual work. Spiritual work requires the supernatural assistance of the Lord that only comes through the empowerment of the Spirit and the means of prayer.

The Preacher Shepherd

One other area is critical in the preparation of the preacher. Much is available in pastoral resources and training about the role of the pastor today. Pastors have volumes of material available outlining their roles and responsibilities. Some experts tell them they need to act like ranchers. Others call them CEOs. The model of teaching pastor is a recent description given for pastors today. However, all of these titles leave out one critical component that is so important for pastors today. Pastors are to care for their people. *Shepherd* carries this connotation very well. Kinlaw says, “Shared suffering is at the heart of pastoral ministry, as the pastor takes the burden of his people into his own life and thus helps to alleviate them” (37). Shared suffering requires leaving the office and getting involved in the lives of the people.

Pastors of all size churches can find their own ways to accomplish this aspect of ministry. Some pastors make sure they are the last ones to leave every week after the service, shaking as many hands as possible. Others send many cards throughout the course of the year. Keeping a prayer list and praying through the names on a yearly basis nurtures a shepherd’s heart. A pastor may not be able to visit every person who is in the hospital, but going to see some is possible. This sense of connection outside of Sunday morning will foster connection on Sunday morning:

I realize that in preaching if I’m not where the people are at and not engaged with them, I’m probably not going to connect with them. God has given me a love for people—to reach out to people and be reached by people. (“Preaching from A Pastor’s Heart” 52)

Pastors will best connect with people when they preach if they are doing the hard work of staying connected throughout the week.

Research Design

The research design for this project used an explanatory mixed method. The goal of the project was to discover changes that occurred in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene. I used a six-week sermon series as the independent variable. Quantitative tools gauged the changes that occurred in these areas before and after the series. However, research question #3 asked about possible preaching practices that helped to facilitate those changes. Discovering these best practices required a focus group. The focus group yielded qualitative data to analyze, hence the need for the mixed approach. John W. Creswell says, “A mixed methods research design is a process for collecting, analyzing, and ‘mixing’ both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study or a series of studies to understand a research problem” (535). This approach also allowed me to search for best preaching practices using qualitative data as a secondary benefit of the research.

The independent variable was a sermon series entitled God’s Grand Design for Your Life. The first data-collecting instrument was the PSQ. I used this tool to discern pre-series views of Christlike beliefs and practices. After the series, I administered the DCQ in an attempt to discern the changes that occurred in these areas during the series. In order to discern the changes that occurred, I used the same questions on both instruments. I hoped these styles of questions would elicit data that would produce clear-cut results for further qualitative analysis.

The qualitative tool involved a focus group designed to ask deeper questions about changes that occurred during the series as well as best practices in the preaching that facilitated the changes. Merriam says qualitative research has five characteristics: “[T]he goal of eliciting understanding and meaning, the researcher as primary instrument of data collection and analysis, the use of fieldwork, an inductive orientation to analysis, and findings that are richly descriptive” (11). A focus group from the Southwest campus of Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene provided the third means of data collection necessary for this phase of the project. The discerning best practices focus groups tool was used for this segment of the research.

Summary

The Church of the Nazarene is a holiness denomination facing challenges in relation to communicating their core doctrine. Recovering the Wesleyan middle way through the development of a conjunctive theology is one step in the right direction toward this goal. Casting the message in the language of Christlikeness is also helpful in this generation. Balancing the language of purity with the language of relationships is essential in the current postmodern context. Bringing crisis and process back into balance is also critical. Arguing over words such as *second* or *subsequent* is at best unproductive. Postmoderns who value community and inclusion will appreciate seeing Nazarenes living out an inclusive theology of love concerning these issues.

God’s plan of salvation is a grand mystery. The American holiness movement at times *empiricized* the order of salvation in line with the modernist philosophy of their day. In combination with the tendencies of the populist hermeneutic, Finneyism, and American idealism, American holiness efforts at times discounted the mystery of God in

salvation for more of an empirical name it-claim it process. Despite the errors, God used these people to spark a revival that had a positive impact on the society around them. The Wesleyan correctives of the past forty years in combination with a renewed American holiness pathos will go a long way in moving forward with the message of Christlikeness in the twenty-first century.

Missionaries and pastors of the twenty-first century will seek to understand the postmodern culture in which they minister for effectively communicating the gospel in this generation. A hermeneutic of humility, which interprets Scripture within the Wesleyan order of salvation and analogy of faith, can give a hermeneutic lens for the Wesleyan holiness preacher to interpret Scripture. This same metanarrative can aid pastors-preachers in designing a preaching strategy that develops Christlike disciples in their individual contexts. In the spirit of Wesley and the American holiness people of the nineteenth century, the time to present Wesley's optimism of grace with the American-holiness pathos for transforming the world is here.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Problem and Purpose

Nazarenes face a real crisis in the area of theological identity. Wynkoop's book brought some long-festered issues to the boiling point in 1973. The critical issues involve a debate about a substantial paradigm of entire sanctification as opposed to a relational paradigm. The other critical issue involves crisis and process. The American holiness leaders of the nineteenth century emphasized the crisis of entire sanctification over the process sanctification. Wynkoop and her followers emphasize the process. However, in both these areas, Wesley, the conjunctive theologian, holds both elements in tension. Much of the disagreements over the last forty years are due to the inability or unwillingness to embrace Wesley's middle way.

Nazarene preachers today should embrace their heritage rather than hide from it. Some mistakes occurred during the early days of the denomination. However, the American holiness sense of mission is worthy of appreciation and imitation. Many lives were changed, and society benefitted from the American holiness movement. Furthermore, Wesley's middle way can help bring differing voices together and give a clear message of Christlike, holy living in the twenty-first century. The Wesleyan message is what the world needs today. Communicated in a balanced, contextual method, Nazarenes, and other holiness denominations can bring a desperately needed voice and passion to bear on the world's problems today. Nazarenes need to live out the message of perfect love and proclaim this message boldly and clearly in today's world.

Purpose

The purpose of the research was to provide one means for evaluating changes in beliefs and practices of Christlike living in the twenty-first century for members and attendees at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene through the means of a sermon series presented over a period of six weeks. The purpose grew out of years of frustration in being unable to help members of my congregations develop in the area of Christlikeness. I sensed their frustration as well and hoped to find ways to help my congregation in this area through this research.

Research Questions

Three research questions kept the study focused. Questions 1 and 2 discerned changes regarding Christlike beliefs and practices that occurred in the participants during the preaching of the sermon series. Question 3 focused on probing the nature and causes of the changes that occurred because of the sermon series..

Research Question #1

What were the beliefs and practices of the group regarding Christlike living prior to the sermon series?

The purpose of this question was to gain an understanding of where the congregation at the Southwest campus of Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene stood at the beginning of the sermon series. I had to develop my own instrument for this project (PSQ, see Appendix B), since no present instrument existed for measuring the outcomes of this type of project. The instrument examined existing beliefs and practices in two different sections by using Likert-style questions with answers ranging from (1) strongly disagree through (5) strongly agree. The instrument also assessed current levels of

practices regarding Christlike living on a scale of (1) never through (4) always. The congregation had the opportunity to participate in this phase after a morning service prior to the beginning of the sermon series. The participants also gave their names on the tool, so I could measure the changes that occurred. The design of the tool enabled me to discern the baseline necessary for discerning changes that occurred through the preaching of the sermon series.

Research Question #2

What changes occurred in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living in the group subsequent to the sermon series?

After the final sermon in the series, the discerning changes questionnaire (DCQ, see Appendix C) analyzed the changes in beliefs and practices in Christlike living that occurred among those who heard the sermons during the sermon series (see Appendix A). The PSQ (see Appendix B) and DCQ were identical in order to ensure validity and reliability of the tools. I also asked the participants to give their names for this instrument as well, in order to measure the changes that occurred.

In order to get accurate feedback, I administered the DCQ right after the final sermon in the series. Administering the test right after the final sermon created one problem, however. Obviously, some people who filled out the PSQ were not present for the final sermon. Therefore, those who were not present received the DCQ over a two-week period, so I could receive as much data as possible. The PSQ and DCQ provided the necessary quantitative information to discern changes that occurred in beliefs and practices during the sermon series.

Research Question #3

What elements of the sermon design and delivery contributed to the changes in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living in the twenty-first century?

The ultimate goal of this project was to measure changes that occurred in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living through the means of the sermon series. However, I also hoped to discern what elements of the preaching series produced the changes. Quantitative analysis alone could not yield all the data for this aspect of the project. Qualitative analysis was also necessary in order to assess what elements of the preaching series produced changes in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living at the Southwest campus of Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene. The DBPFG instrument and a focus group provided the qualitative information needed to answer the third research question. A semi-structured interview process as articulated by Tim Sensing provided the best approach in these focus groups (107). Starter questions helped get the discussion moving. The flow of discussion and purpose of the project determined what other questions to use in each of the group sessions. Appendix D lists the kind of questions that proved useful in the project.

Participants

All participants ages 16 and over from the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene provided the population and participants for the PSQ and DCQ. The leadership team for the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene provided permission for this phase and the second phase of the data collection process of the project. Getting as many as people as possible to participate in this phase was critical for this phase of the project in order to guarantee quality data to analyze.

The second phase of data gathering involved a focus group. Sensing says that purposive samples “will be more useful for D.Min projects” (83). The Southwest campus is not large, but does have several different age groups from varying backgrounds. I chose seven people from different age groups, gender, and levels of spiritual maturity. I believed this diversity would offer quality data to help more deeply discern the nature of the changes that occurred because of the series. Additionally, I asked questions in this group to discover elements of the preaching that may have helped facilitate those changes.

Design of the Study

The purpose of the research was to provide one means for evaluating changes in beliefs and practices of Christlike living in the twenty-first century for members and attendees at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene through the means of a sermon series presented over a period of six weeks. The intervention for this project was the six-week series entitled, God’s Grand Design for Your Life. The first week of the series, I preached on the new birth in 2 Corinthians 5:17. The next three weeks I spoke from 1 John 2 and 4 to address the life of Christlikeness. Each week I gave an opportunity to respond in full surrender to the call of Christlikeness. In the last two weeks, I preached about the means of grace that foster Christlike living and Christlike behaviors that evidence a Christlike life. I approached these subjects from a Wesleyan perspective based firmly on his order of salvation.

Before the sermon series, all attenders at the Southwest campus had the opportunity to fill out the PSQ, which measured their current understanding regarding the beliefs and practices of Christlike living. After the sermon series, the DCQ measured the

changes that occurred because of the series. Obviously, the only way to measure this sort of change was to have the participants give their names on the questionnaires.

Each week of the series, a group of seven people met to discuss the sermon with me over lunch right after the worship service ended. One purpose of this group was to ascertain qualitative data regarding changes that occurred in beliefs and practices of Christlike living. However, as a secondary benefit of the project, I was also able to seek information regarding what elements of the preaching helped to facilitate those changes, if any. I used a form of purposive sampling to select these groups. Given the smaller size of the study group, I strove to focus on age, gender, and level of spiritual maturity. I was able to get a good cross sample of people through this approach. The DBPFG instrument, utilizing a semi-structured interview approach, provided the data for this phase of the project.

I employed an explanatory, mixed-method design for this study. The PSQ and DCQ yielded the necessary quantitative data for the changes that occurred in beliefs and practices because of the sermon series. The DBPFG yielded the necessary qualitative data to evaluate if any of the elements of the preaching during the series influenced the changes in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living.

Instrumentation

Three researcher-designed instruments provided the necessary data for this project. Two instruments were quantitative in nature, and one was qualitative in nature. The PSQ analyzed beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living prior to the sermon series (see Appendix B). The DCQ demonstrated changes that occurred in these beliefs and practices after the sermon series (see Appendix C). In order to discern changes before

and after the sermon series (see Appendix A), I used the same questions for both instruments. The beliefs scale on these instruments moved from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The practices scale for these tools moved from (1) never to (4) always.

Beyond these quantitative measurements, the researcher-designed DBPFG instrument provided qualitative data to explore what elements of the preaching, if any, facilitated any changes in beliefs and practices (see Appendix D). I used a form of purposeful sampling to create the focus group. Given the smaller size of the congregation, I chose participants based on age, gender, and level of spiritual maturity. The diversity of biological and spiritual age provided quality participants for this portion of the project.

Expert Review

Due to the nature of the project, I had to design my own instruments because it was not possible to find an instrument that measured results regarding the subject of entire sanctification. The sermon series was the basis for the PSQ and DCQ. After writing the sermons, I was able to develop questionnaires to measure pre- and postawareness levels regarding Christlike beliefs and practices. I had to complete the sermons first because the sermons were the independent variable. The sermons determined the issues that needed measuring.

Therefore, for the purpose of validity and reliability, the PSQ and the DCQ required an expert review. The mentor for the project and the proposal team served to validate the tool. Janet Dean, a licensed psychologist with expertise in statistics, also helped with the validation process.

As a result of the expert review, the major changes for the PSQ and DCQ required changes in wording of the questions, design of the tools for ease of use by the participants, and adaptation of the scales. The beliefs scales were changed from ranges of 1 (strongly disagree) through 4 (strongly agree) to encompass a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) through 5 (strongly agree). The new score range added was 3 (neutral). The practices section was adapted to a four-point scale ranging from 1 (never) through 4 (always).

I originally intended to use two focus groups for the project that would take place after the sermon series was completed. My expert review team recommended that I use one team given the smaller size of the congregation. Secondly, they recommended conducting the focus groups immediately following the series. I agreed that both these changes would help the project and made this modification, as well. I selected seven people who agreed to meet with me for six weeks for lunch right after the worship services were completed.

Variables

The independent variable of this project was the six-week sermon series intervention. The dependent variable was the changes that occurred in the participants because of the sermon series.

Several intervening variables were possible. Knowing how many people would fill out the questionnaires was impossible to predict. The participants put their names on the PSQ and DCQ, since the questionnaires did not involve any sensitive information. This step also prevented me from receiving two questionnaires from the same person. Obviously, participants may have felt pressure to answer the questions in ways that cast

them in a more favorable light. In order to prevent this negative outcome, the congregation received encouragement to be completely truthful along with the promise of confidentiality.

Another possible intervening variable was getting inaccurate answers in the focus groups. People have a tendency to tell pastors what they want to hear. Training someone to lead the participants was one way to avoid this possibility. However, personally leading the focus groups seemed to be the surest way to receive accurate, firsthand information. A strong attempt to pick quality participants was another response to this possible intervening variable. Lastly, a digital recorder helped ascertain accurate data collection.

Another variable was uncontrollable. Very few people attend church every week anymore. Obviously, this variable had an impact on the data collection. Using multiple distributions of the tools, coupled with the qualitative DBPFG, were some methods used to try to lessen the impact of this variable. Participants also had the opportunity to listen to sermons on the church Web site if they had to miss one of the weeks of the series.

Reliability and Validity

Creswell says in relation to quantitative tools, “Reliability means that scores from an instrument are stable and consistent. Scores should be nearly the same when researchers administer the instrument multiple times at different times” (159). He goes on to say, “Validity is the development of sound evidence to demonstrate that the test interpretation (of scores about the concept or construct that the test is assumed to measure) matches its proposed use” (159.) Put another way, “[v]alidity is the degree to which all of the evidence points to the interpretation of test scores for the proposed

purpose” (159). For this project, I utilized researcher-designed tools. Therefore, an expert review was necessary to determine validity and reliability for the quantitative tool. I took several steps to establish the validity and reliability of the tools. The proposal and defense team, along with Dean, helped greatly in this process.

In relation to qualitative validity and reliability, Creswell says, “Validating findings means that the researcher determines the accuracy or credibility of the findings through strategies such as member checking or triangulation” (259). Allowing members to validate my conclusions served to strengthen my information analysis of the focus group interactions. I also used multiple methods of note taking. An assistant took notes as I did during the groups. Furthermore, I utilized a digital recorder during these sessions in order to collect quality data.

Data Collection

Data collection required two months to complete. I made the congregation aware of the upcoming sermon series, entitled God’s Grand Design For Your Life, weeks prior to the beginning of the series. I encouraged the congregation through public announcements, video announcements, social media, print media, and phone calls to attend this important sermon series. People today need plenty of warning and reminders to get their attention.

Two weeks before the series, I administered the PSQ. The congregation received clear instructions regarding how to complete the questionnaire. I also gave them assurances that participation was voluntary and appreciated. I asked them to include their names for more effective data collection with the promise of confidentiality. The congregation also received information about the upcoming series at this time.

The congregation was also able to complete notes on the sermons, using note pages in their bulletins, to help them retain information they learned. As has been noted, people also had the opportunity to listen to the message on the Web site if they could not attend a particular Sunday. Ongoing publicity also continued throughout the entire series in an attempt to keep it in front of the congregation.

Following the last message in the series, I asked the attenders present to fill out the DCQ right at the completion of the last message. Again, the participants received the option to fill out the instrument as they did the first one. I also gave further assurance of confidentiality and appreciation for their help.

A focus group provided qualitative data regarding changes that occurred during the series in the areas of Christlike beliefs and practices. I used a semi-purposive sampling that included age, gender, and varying levels of spiritual maturity. The groups met each week of the six-week series immediately after the worship service. Over lunch, a semi-structured discussion provided feedback regarding changes that occurred and any elements of the preaching that may have helped to facilitate those changes.

Focus groups lasted one and a half hours per group. The semi-structured interviews allowed for unplanned data items. In order to attain the necessary data, I made the decision to lead this group. Throughout the whole process, the participants received the certainty of absolutely confidentiality.

I also made the decision to use a digital recorder to ensure the quality of data collection. I transcribed the data on the recorder following each meeting. This data was the key to discerning what elements of the preaching resulted in the changes during the sermon series.

Data Analysis

In order to get quality data to analyze, the PSQ assessed beliefs and practices regarding Christlikeness prior to the sermon series. A straightforward strongly agree and strongly disagree scale was important for attaining clear, reliable data. The DCQ asked the same questions following the sermon series. The purpose of this approach was to discern what areas of beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living changed after the sermon series. I compiled the results and sent them out for analysis as quickly as possible when the sermon series was completed.

The DBPFG data analysis required several readings of the data collected from the focus groups. I used Creswell's approach for analyzing the data as laid out in the following steps. First, I did an initial scan of the transcribed data to gain general familiarity with the data. In the second reading, I read more carefully looking for general themes in the data. In the third reading, those themes narrowed and enabled classification of the data into categories. After several more readings of the material, I coded the data and set it in clear categories (261-62). These themes and patterns served to help develop some of the best practices for preaching in a transformative way about Christlike beliefs and practices.

Ethical Procedures

The leadership team at Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene approved this project at its 17 June 2014 meeting. They received detailed information regarding the nature and purpose of the research. I also assured everyone in the groups of the confidentiality of the information provided to me in the groups. The group members also understood that their names would not be mentioned anywhere in the project or anywhere else for that matter.

In addition, the participants understood that involvement in the project was strictly voluntary.

The leadership team also received detailed information regarding the focus group process. I also gave them information regarding the measures to protect confidentiality in that group as well. The team also received copies of the informed consent forms (see Appendix E). They had opportunities for questions preceding a vote to allow the project to move forward.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Problem and Purpose

Nazarenes are currently coming out of a period of much discourse and debate regarding the nature and scope of their core doctrine, entire sanctification. As leaders and pastors in the denomination debated these issues over the past fifty years, the people in the local congregations of the Church of the Nazarene were understandably confused regarding the nature and scope of entire sanctification. Lack of clarity over doctrine is a significant enough problem. However, unclear doctrine plays out in unclear preaching, and unclear preaching does not result in meaningful life change. Without a clear, coherent theology, the leaders and pastors of the denomination have had a difficult time sounding a clear call for inner life change that results in Christlike attitudes and lifestyle.

Some pastors and congregations try to hold on and preserve the past by replicating the models and styles of the early years of the denomination. Others adopt a community church mentality largely ignoring the mandate to spread Christian holiness that spurred the denomination to grow exponentially in the early years of the denomination. Some advocate a thoroughly Wesleyan mentality and approach as the best means for reaching a postmodern generation. Confusion still seems to rule the day in the pulpits and pews of the denomination regarding their core doctrine. I have asserted that some Wesleyan correctives regarding the theology of entire sanctification wedded with the sense of mission of the founders of the denomination can offer one step out of the confusion of the last generation towards a clear, coherent message of life change. Despite whether people agree with this approach or not, Nazarenes must find a way to unite

around the original mission of spreading the scriptural message of Christlikeness throughout the world in order to continue forward into the future in a vibrant and transformative manner.

The purpose of the research was to provide one means for evaluating changes in beliefs and practices of Christlike living in the twenty-first century for members and attendees at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene through the means of a sermon series presented over a period of six weeks. A Wesleyan theology of entire sanctification infused with the early American holiness *pathos* served as the foundation for the project. Preaching for life change requires sound theology.

The research questions allowed for monitoring changes in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living that occurred through the preaching of a series entitled God's grand design for your life. Additionally, the third research question allowed for deeper research into the changes that occurred along with aspects of the preaching that fostered those changes. My hope was that I might receive input about what elements of the preaching helped foster changes in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike beliefs and practices.

Participants

The participants for this project included two different groups of people from the same congregation. First of all, all attenders and members sixteen years of age and older received an invitation to participate in the first phase of data collection for the project. The first instrument they completed was the PSQ (see Appendix B). After the sermon series, the participants completed the DCQ (see Appendix C). Twenty-seven participants,

including eleven females (40.7 percent) and sixteen males (59.3 percent) completed these two instruments. Ages ranged from 16 to 79, with a mean of 52 ($SD = 19.67$).

These tools provided quantitative data that measured beliefs and practices about Christlike living before and after a sermon series on the doctrine of entire sanctification at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene. By using the same questions and scales on both instruments, I was able to discern what changes, if any, occurred during the sermon series.

The second group of participants was composed of people I chose from the congregation to participate in a focus group with me. This group met for six weeks right after the worship to discuss the sermons together. The focus group gave me the opportunity to probe deeper regarding any changes that occurred. Additionally, I was able to gather data about elements of the preaching that might have been influential in these changes.

I used a semi-purpose sampling approach. The Southwest campus is only composed of about 130 people, so I could not employ high levels of sampling. The group was composed of different people based on age, gender, and varying levels of spiritual maturity. Participant 1 is a young married male in his thirties with two young children. He became a Christian at the Southwest campus as well. He has been attending now for four years and has grown spiritually at a steady rate. He also offered quality perspective from the viewpoint of a new Christian who had never attended church until he started attending the Southwest campus. Participant 2 is a young married woman in her thirties with two young children. She has been in church her whole life. I chose her because of her church background and level of commitment in her Christian walk at her young age.

Participants 3 and 4 are newly married couple. Participant 3 is a male in his late 40s who recently became a Christian. I chose him for his perspective as a very new Christian.

Participant 4, his wife, is in her 30s. She was out of church for a long time and recently started attending again after the two of them married. Participant 5 is a married woman in her 60s who has been in church most of her life. She was not a member of the Church of the Nazarene before she started the Southwest campus. Her love for the Lord is evident, and she gave excellent perspective as a new Nazarene who strives for Christlikeness.

Participant 6 is a lifelong Nazarene. She has attended the Southwest campus from the very early days of the church going back all the way until 1968. I desired the perspective of a lifelong Nazarene, and her insights were very helpful. Lastly, Participant 7 is a young father in his 30s with two children. He is a lifelong Nazarene from more of an American holiness perspective. I desired his viewpoint as a young father from an American holiness background, and he certainly contributed solid input in the discussions.

Research Question #1

What were the beliefs and practices of the group regarding Christlike living prior to the sermon series? The PSQ provided the data to answer this question. The ability to measure changes in beliefs and practices of Christlike living required a baseline before the beginning of the intervention project. Data from this tool provided these measurements by assessing preseries beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene.

The sermon series entitled, God's Grand Design for Your Life was expected to change individuals' beliefs and practices regarding entire sanctification (i.e., Christlikeness). Participants completed the PSQ and the DCQ before and after the sermon

series, respectively. Their responses indicated their level of agreement with each item. Averaging the responses provided an average response score at pretest and an average response score at posttest.

At pretest, mean responses for the beliefs subscale fell between agree (4) and strongly agree (5); whereas, mean responses for the behavior subscale fell between 2 (occasionally) and 3 (quite often). Direct comparison of the two subscales was not possible because they used different response formats. Both subscales of the PSQ showed high internal consistency at pretest. The thirty-six belief statements had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.899, and the twenty behavior statements had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.941 (see Table 4.1).

Table 4.1. Means and Standard Deviations of PreTest PSQ Scores ($N = 27$).

Category	Pretest	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Overall level of agreement with all PSQ items	3.69	0.43
Beliefs related to Christlike living	4.22	0.45
Behaviors related to Christlike living	2.76	0.62

The results indicated a strong knowledge of beliefs regarding issues of salvation and entire sanctification. As indicated in the pre and post individual assessment scores (see Appendix E), only ten of the thirty-six beliefs analyzed fall below 4 or agree. For question 6, a low average score actually indicated a stronger understanding of the belief measured in that statement. The lower scores in the beliefs section, below a 4, provided

some areas of analysis for gauging changes that occurred in beliefs regarding Christlike living.

The responses provided for the practices section of the PSQ scored lower than the beliefs section. The scale for this section ran from 1 (never) through 4 (always). The average score was 2.76 on the PSQ, running a little short of 3 (quite often). The initial results of the PSQ indicated a stronger score on beliefs regarding Christlike living than on the practices of Christlike living.

Research Question #2

What changes occurred in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living in the group subsequent to the sermon series? The PSQ provided the preseries data regarding beliefs and practices of Christlike living at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene necessary for assessing any changes that occurred because of the sermon series. After the sermon series, the original participants who filled out the PSQ had the opportunity to complete the DCQ. The two tools were identical in questions and scales, providing the opportunity to gauge any changes that occurred in beliefs and practices of Christlike living during the sermon series. Changes did occur from the beginning of the sermon series in some of the areas the instruments measured, providing data for deeper analysis.

A series of dependent *t*-tests provided the ability to explore any potential change in level of agreement before and after the sermon series. As shown in Table 4.2, a significant change occurred in the overall degree regarding how participants agreed with items on the DCQ. Participants showed more agreement with items at posttest, $M = 3.82$,

SD = 0.35, than at pretest, $M = 3.69$, $SD = 0.43$, $t(26) = -2.54$, $p = .018$, suggesting an increased understanding and practice of Christlike living.

Table 4.2. Means and Standard Deviations of Pre- and Posttest DCQ Scores (N = 27)

	Pretest	Posttest	t (df)
	M (SD)	M (SD)	
Overall level of agreement with all DCQ items	3.69 (0.43)	3.82 (0.35)	-2.54 (26)*
Beliefs related to Christlike living	4.22 (0.45)	4.34 (0.37)	-1.74 (26)
Behaviors related to Christlike living	2.76 (0.62)	2.90 (0.51)	-2.36 (26)*
	($n = 85$)	($n = 209$)	

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .001$

Items on the DCQ include statements of belief as well as statements regarding behaviors of Christlike living. Therefore, in order to understand the overall change in level of agreement to DCQ items, a series of dependent t -tests provided the deeper level of analysis necessary. As can be seen in Table 4.2, participants did not significantly change their level of agreement with the theological statements related for Christlike living from pretest, $M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.45$, to posttest, $M = 4.34$, $SD = 0.37$, $t(26) = 1.74$, $p = .093$, with the average score falling between agree and strongly agree. However, significant change in the frequency that participants said they participated in activities related to Christlike living did occur. Participants tended to report higher frequency of behaviors at posttest than at pretest. The scoring ranges changed from $M = 2.76$, $SD =$

0.62, pretest, to $M = 2.90$, $SD = 0.51$, $t(26) = -2.34$, $p = .026$, posttest, with the average scores at both testing intervals falling closer to 3 (quite often) than to 2 (occasionally).

Further analysis, with a series of dependent t -tests, explored participants' responses for individual items on the DQQ, (see Appendix E). Only three of the thirty-six belief statements showed significant change in degree of agreement from pretest to posttest. Five of the twenty behavioral statements showed significant change in frequency before and after the sermon series.

As mentioned already, three areas of belief showed significant difference between the PSQ and DCQ instruments. Statement 17 on the survey asserts, "Adam's and Eve's sin is the root cause of relational problems today." This statement of belief on the PSQ averaged a score of 3.96, just under agree. On the DCQ, the statement averaged a score of 4.32, well over strongly agree. Another encouraging score came on statement 30: "I am familiar with the phrase *entire sanctification*." On the PSQ, the statement averaged a score of 3.92, just under agree. On the DCQ, the statement averaged 4.48, well over the agree threshold. One surprise finding was that statement 24, "I understand what it means to be born again," actually decreased in average. On the PSQ, the statement averaged 4.74, but on the DCQ, the average was 4.59.

Overall, the sermon series did not seem to have much influence on beliefs regarding Christlike living for the people at the Southwest campus. The results indicated that most of the people already had a firm grasp of the issues at hand. The results on statement 17 indicated a greater awareness of the relational aspect of Christlike living. The results on statement 30 indicated a greater awareness of the concept of entire

sanctification. The series did seem to put the goal of Christlikeness on the radar for the people at the campus.

Two areas of significant change occurred regarding the means of grace in the lives of the participants in this project. Statement 44, regarding the practice of personal practice averaged 3.19 on the PSQ. The average on the DCQ following the series was 3.44. Additionally, statement 46 regarding the impact of Communion on the lives of the participants averaged 3.11 on the PSQ. On the DCQ, the average was 3.56. I did not preach on this topic specifically, but I did serve Communion on the day the participants completed the DCQ.

Deeper analysis revealed an interesting insight regarding changes in practices of Christlike living. Questions 37 through 47 measured practices regarding the means of grace in the lives of the believers. I preached on the role of prayer and regular time in the Word in sermon 5 of the series. Though the changes were not significant in nature, every one of these practices averaged a little higher on the DCQ than they did on the PSQ, further verifying that changes did occur from before and after the series in the areas of practices in Christlike living (see Appendix E).

The last three significant changes were in the areas of service and outreach in the world, in which those who are seeking to lead Christlike lives will naturally find themselves engaged. Based on the averages from the PSQ and DCQ for statement 38, the participants were more likely to commit themselves to fulfill God's purpose for their lives on a daily basis because of the sermon series. The average on the PSQ for this statement was 3.19. On the DCQ, the average was 3.44. Statements 54 and 56 are of a similar nature to statement 38. They deal with involvement in local and global ministry

respectively. On statement 54 of the PSQ, the average was 2.46. Following the sermon series, the average on the PCQ was 2.73. For statement 56 regarding involvement in world missions, the average on the PSQ was 2.04. On the DCQ, the average was 2.33. Clearly, elements of the sermon series influenced the participants to be more involved in meaningful service in the world around them.

Summarizing these results, the sermon series did not seem to influence the participants very much in the area of beliefs regarding Christlike living. The increased awareness regarding entire sanctification, as well as the relational nature of entire sanctification are worthy of notice, however. The five areas of significant change in practices related to Christlike living indicated that the sermon series did increase awareness and lifestyle changes regarding involvement in spiritual disciplines and ministry in the world. Though not significant in the level of change, the increased awareness and level of activity in the other spiritual disciplines that the PSQ and DCQ served to demonstrate that the practice of spiritual disciplines was an area where the sermon series affected change in the lives of the participants.

Research Question #3

What elements of the sermon design and delivery contributed to the changes in beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living in the twenty-first century? Research question #3 provided me the opportunity to explore further the changes that occurred in beliefs and practices of Christlike living with qualitative measurements. Additionally, as secondary benefit for the project, I was also able to explore if any elements of the preaching contributed in changes that occurred during the sermon series.

In order to attain these qualitative measurements, I formed a focus group of seven people utilizing the researcher-designed DBPFG (see Appendix D). Upon advisement from my expert review team, I conducted these groups immediately following each sermon over a lunch that I provided. I chose the seven people based on age, gender, and spiritual maturity (see Table 4.3). Incidentally, the group had a very good mix of newer Nazarenes and lifetime Nazarenes. This element did not happen by design, but I believe this factor helped in ascertaining data from a wide cross-section people.

Table 4.3. Focus Group Demographics

Participant	Gender	Age	Spiritual Age	Affiliation
# 1	Male	30+	Under 5 years	New Nazarene
# 2	Female	30+	20 + years	New Nazarene
# 3	Male	40+	Under 5 years	New Nazarene
# 4	Female	30+	20 + years	Nazarene
# 5	Female	60+	20 + years	Nazarene
# 6	Female	70 +	40 + years	Nazarene
# 7	Male	40 +	30 + years	Nazarene

I utilized a semi-structured approach during the focus groups. Typically, the discussion led away from the designed questions, but I found that some of the best information came from these times of unstructured discussion. The focus group both confirmed and shed new light on the quantitative tools.

The Practice of Spiritual Disciplines

The focus group data confirmed at least one finding from the PSQ and DCQ. The PSQ indicated a lower level of involvement regarding personal spiritual disciplines and the means of grace among the participants. The DCQ showed improvement in these areas. However, even after the improvement the scores still came in on the low end. On week five of the sermon series, I preached specifically on the role of prayer and the Word in the life of the Christian. In the discussion, I received comments of regret and frustration regarding the practices of the individual members of the group. Participant 5 said, “I need to make more time in my Bible study.” Participant 1 echoed this statement, “I need more time for fitting the Bible into normal everyday life. I like how you brought up mp3 and other options we have to listen to the Bible.” In session two of the focus group, a general discussion developed around how busy and hurried people are today. They cited this aspect of life as one of the major problems for living the Christlike life today. In general, these comments served to confirm the results on the PSQ and DCQ in the area of personal spiritual disciplines.

Greater Understanding of Theological Terms

The PSQ and DCQ seemed to indicate that the preaching series did not result in major changes regarding beliefs about Christlikeness. However, the focus group data contradicted some of the results of the quantitative tools. In the first sermon, I preached on the new birth. As part of that sermon, I introduced the concepts of justification, regeneration or new birth, sanctification, and glorification with mixed results. Positively speaking, the group said the words were helpful because I explained them well in the sermon. I asked all of them to select which one of the concepts they were least familiar

with before the sermon (See Table 4.4). Following this question, I asked them if the sermon helped explain these concepts better and, if so, what was helpful.

Table 4.4. Key Word Awareness Exercise

Participant	Least Familiar	More Familiar
# 1	Justification	Yes
# 2	Sanctification	Yes
# 3	Sanctification	Yes
# 4	Justification	Yes
# 5	Sanctification	Yes
# 6	Justification and sanctification	Yes

As is obvious, all of the participants understood the concepts better because of the sermon. Participant 1 said, “I had never even heard the word [justification] before so simply hearing the word and having it explained helped him.” He also said, “[I]t helps to understand that spiritual growth is a process and that people do struggle and fail.” Participant 2 said, “[T]he phrase ‘becoming just like Jesus’ and the ‘steps’ of how God works in us was helpful for me.” Participant 5 said, “I appreciated the emphasis on the process of becoming like Christ. Understanding that everything does not have to happen at once is also helpful for me.” Participant 6 said, “[T]he sermon brought these concepts back to me and helped me see the need to focus on becoming more like Jesus.” The data in the focus groups indicated at least more reflection on these issues, and they all seemed to believe they possessed a better understanding of the concepts because of the sermons.

However, they all said that this information would have been a deterrent to making the decision to follow Christ in the first sermon. They all agreed that all the

information coupled with the call to make a decision for Christ would have been overwhelming. Participant 5 said, “My head would have exploded.” Participant 3 said, “I would have had a hard time processing the information and then deciding to follow Christ at the same time.” I learned from this input the difference between an informational and invitational sermon and the importance of keeping invitational sermons very focused on a specific outcome.

One more note is worth observing on this subject. Participant 5 expanded later on her growing understanding of sanctification. She said, “When I filled out the questionnaire [PSQ], I did not mark that I knew what sanctification meant. However, I understand better what it means now. Pastors really do not even talk about this word anymore.” Specifically in relation to the first sermon, she said, “I spent a lot of time during the week researching the term but none of the information helped her understand the word like the message.” Participant 2 said, “I grew up Pentecostal and always heard people say, ‘I am saved, sanctified, and Spirit filled,’ but I did not know what those words meant. Hearing the words and the definitions was helpful for me.” Clearly, some people did experience growth in understanding these concepts from the sermons. They also expressed the sermons were helpful for them in their spiritual walk.

Crisis and Process in Sanctification

Session 4 was amazing. The sermon for this week focused heavily on the need for surrender. I went into the sermon believing this week would be the one where I would call the congregation into a life of full surrender, and I did do that. However, as I kept probing on the subject, I was amazed to find out that the group heard much more about process in the sermon than they heard about anything else. I was very surprised by what I

was hearing at this point. Therefore, I did an instant poll to make sure I understood what they were saying. I asked each of them to respond whether they heard crisis, process, or a balance in the sermon (see Table 4.5). None of the people in the group heard a stronger emphasis on crisis in the sermon. Participants 4 and 7 heard a balance, and the rest heard process.

Table 4.5. Crisis, Process, or Balance Exercise

Participant	Crisis	Balance	Process
# 1	Absent		
# 2			Yes
# 3			Yes
# 4		Yes	
# 5			Yes
# 6			Yes
# 7		Yes	

Honestly, I did not get much feedback on why they heard the sermon the way they did. Throughout the focus group meetings, they seemed to keep coming to the process side of the equation, despite the fact that I gave an opportunity for total surrender in nearly every sermon. I can only hypothesize that process is their natural leaning, so they heard what they thought I was saying through their own preconceived ideas.

Crisis did come through in the sermon, however. Participant 7 said, “We have to get the place where we give up control.” Participant 4 said, “Part of us wants to be in control. We finally get to a point when we say I cannot control it and let go. I am done doing it my way, and then you surrender it all.” They also mentioned a drama that closed out the message that day. A woman was writing in her journal about how much she struggles with giving up control. She wants to surrender but finds it very difficult because

of how she was let down by her father and other men her life. At the end, she broke down and said, “I don’t want to fight you anymore.” Participant 6 said, “Those are issues women deal with.” In response, Participant 7 said, “You did not have to say anything else.” Though the group seemed to lean naturally on the process side of the equation, they also were comfortable with the crisis side of the equation.

Overall, this data contributed in another finding regarding the group’s view of crisis and process in entire sanctification. The group evidenced a nuanced view of entire sanctification by the fourth discussion group, balancing crisis and process very nicely. As Participant 7 said, “People have smart phones now. Preachers better be on their game now.” I could not find data that linked this view with the sermon series, so I am simply listing this discovery.

The Essence of Christlikeness

In line with these thoughts on sanctification, I questioned the group extensively regarding the *substance* of Christlikeness as well as the *circumstances*. Specifically, I tried to discern how the sermons helped them understand the essence of Christlikeness. The results were not as striking as the previous ones, but I did observe growth in understanding in this area. In the second group meeting, I asked the question, “Prior to the message today, were you familiar with the idea that Christlikeness is God’s purpose for every Christian? What are your thoughts on this now that you have heard these two sermons?” I did not get much of a response until I followed up with this question: “Did you hear anything in the message that helped bring you develop a deeper understanding of this concept?” Participant 1 read a bullet point from the sermon notes: “Christlikeness is lived out in a life of selfless for others.” Participant 7 said, “You wrapped it up in your

final statement: ‘Christlikeness is not the way to Christ; Christ is the way to Christlikeness.’” However, he followed with the comment, “I get that, but I don’t know how to live it.” Participant 6 brought up an illustration from the sermon about an executive who stopped to help a blind girl pick up her fruit stand full of apples that he and his partners had knocked over accidentally in a hurry to catch their plane. His other friends kept right on running for the plane they were about to miss. He did not know she was blind until he handed her money to cover the other expenses. As he walked away, the blind girl asked him, “Are you Jesus?” She said that illustration helped her understand Christlikeness.

Later, in week five of the sermon series, I addressed this issue again. In the focus group that day, I asked, “What do you believe is the essence of Christlike living because of what you heard in today’s message?” Participant 1 said, “Love for one another.” Participant 7 had a great insight on this topic. He said, “I need to pick up the toys. I hate to do dishes. That helps my wife though. True acts of love are hard choices that we need to make every day in life.” He definitely is making good connections on this subject. Participant 5 also had a good story in a similar vein with the previous one. She said, “I liked when you were talking about selfishness and how it plays out in marriage. I am a selfish person. I have to start my day thinking I am going to make his coffee first.” These two were definitely making connections between Christlikeness and everyday living.

One other observation on this topic is worthy of note. Several of them brought up the closing illustration of the day. I shared about a pastor who preached a three-word sermon: “Love one another.” After saying these words three times, separated by long silences, the congregation started spontaneously serving one another in practical ways.

People reconciled and helped meet practical needs for others in the church, and the church was never the same after that day. Many in the group said this illustration helped them understand that this kind of love is the essence of Christlikeness.

I also need to highlight one breakthrough moment regarding this topic of discussion. Participant 7 really struggled with the Christlike concept early on in the group meetings. In the second week, he said Christlikeness means, “Live as Jesus lived. Does that mean live with his attitude or—he walked around the countryside preaching and teaching—Am I supposed to do that?” Thoughts like this one came up at other times, as well. However, the next week he said, “Faith and actions coming together is the fruit that proves a person is a follower. I don’t have to get involved in every area of the church. Faith and action are the true fruit of Christlikeness.” He did not necessarily tie this breakthrough together with something from the sermon, but during the series, he did experience this breakthrough.

These changes did not show up as strikingly as the previous ones. However, the focus groups showed more growth in this area than the quantitative tools indicated. The members demonstrated a healthy understanding of Christlikeness after session five of the focus groups.

Conceptions of Original Sin

One other area of belief on which I tried to get more feedback during the focus groups was original sin. I spent a lot of time on this subject during the sermon series because understanding the nature of original sin is essential for understanding the nature of entire sanctification. I received very mixed input on this issue. Participant 5 said, “I find comfort knowing original sin is present, but he still forgives me and accepts me.”

Later in the meeting she said, “It is going to be there because we live in a sinful world. God can cover the ‘wickedness inside of me.’” I did not seem to get the Wesleyan point of view across here very well.

However, Participant 4 made a very astute comment on the subject in the middle of a lot of inconclusive discussion:

You have a hole in your heart and some people go through their whole lives but never fill it. Then a word or something plants a seed and then God’s conviction to bring them back to God and they fill whole again. I guess it goes back to that original sin that you talked about today. We are born in sin and that is the missing part. We go looking all the wrong places. Pride, or just not knowing what to do, leads people down the wrong paths. I was raised in church so I knew where to look, but I still tried to do things on my own and my own timing and according to my own will.

Without knowing so, she gave a very good description of original sin. She tied this statement directly in with the teaching on original sin, when she said, “I guess it goes back to that original sin that you talked about today.” This statement was the only one that came close to eliciting an understanding of original sin. All the others could mention were different illustrations I used in the series. I talked about how toddlers usually learn the word “no” before “daddy.” Several of them said everyone could connect with that kind of illustration. Outside of observation, I did not notice much movement in understanding for this concept. Though mixed in results, slight progress is noticeable on this subject.

Homiletics

Next, I will deal with qualitative data related to preaching. First, I discovered that certain factors of homiletics are helpful in preaching on Christlikeness today. As I coded the data from the focus groups, the word *illustration* was on page after page of notes.

Regularly, I received input about an object lesson I used that helped someone in the group grasp a concept or discover new truth to help him or her live a life of Christlikeness. I have mentioned a few of those illustrations already. By far, the most popular one was the crockpot object lesson, which I heard about in nearly every group discussion. I actually had a crockpot with me on stage (an Ohio State one), which added to the moment since I pastor in Columbus, Ohio. I said some Christians are like crockpots and some are like pressure cookers. Pressure cooker Christians go around stuffing the bad things down. Finally, they cannot keep the junk down. Something sets them off and the repressed stress explodes everywhere. Crockpot Christians keep simmering in the Spirit and putting off a delightful aroma no matter what the situation is. I heard from much input about how this illustration helped them understand Christlike living.

Another favorite one was at the end of the first sermon on the new birth. I had recyclable material all over the stage that Sunday. I did not mention why the material was on the stage until the very end. I talked about how some people see garbage, but others see a way to make money. I then took out a pen I had with me that someone used recycled water bottles to make. I grabbed a water bottle and showed them the pen made out of water bottles and said, “If humans are smart enough to figure out a way to make a pen from a water bottle, what is to keep God from taking a sinner and turning that sinner into a saint?” Participant 5 specifically referenced this illustration as being particularly helpful for her in understanding the new birth. I used many others, and my notes definitely bear out that these stories were helpful for the people in the group.

The group also made mention of certain techniques that I used. I covered the same topic many times with different illustrations. In the sermon on new birth, I kept repeating,

“You can have a brand new start.” Participant 1 said that technique was helpful in driving home a key point in a memorable way. Participant 6 said that the approach of coming back at different angles to describe sin was helpful to her. She said, “You used different methods and angles that helped keep me interested through the message.” These *homiletical* practices did seem to contribute in helping develop greater understanding of the sermons.

I also made a concerted effort to preach no longer than twenty-five minutes each week, so I would have plenty of time for response. I probed this issue some, but I did not receive any feedback saying that helped or not. Participant 7 said, “[T]o do what the Holy Spirit says and not worry about the rest.” This issue did not appear to help or hinder in the sermon series.

One other technique was effective, however. I heard a good amount feedback about how my personal stories were useful in the sermons. In the first sermon, I related my experience of becoming a Christian. Participant 1 mentioned that the story of my conversion lent credibility for the message on new birth. I also shared my story of going deeper with the Lord my junior year in college. Two hours after praying at the altar, I was playing a game of intramural basketball. During the game, I took a dirty, hard foul on a wide-open layup. I absolutely did not see the person coming and hit the ground very hard. I could have been hurt very badly but was not. The blow did not faze me. I told the congregation, though, that had that happened before my experience with the Lord two hours earlier, I am sure the reaction would have been much different. Participant 5 said, “I really liked the story about the basketball game because there is such a world of difference.” Participant 1 said, “That story was a great example of how a person can

change.” Additionally, Participant 2 said, “It was helpful because the change was immediate.” The personal stories of my times of commitment and renewal definitely helped the group during the sermon series.

Sermon-Based Discussions and Groups

Another confirmation of the findings in the PSQ and DCQ appeared later in the focus groups. The group members agreed that the preaching did help them in understanding and living a life of Christlikeness. However, I discovered a major surprise finding in week four of the focus groups. Question 4 on this day asked, “What does sanctification mean for you now after hearing several different messages on the subject? Do you understand this concept better because of the series?” Participant 6 who was the most familiar with the term going into the series said after some discussion, “It did not have anything to do with the message. These groups have helped me the most. In the service, I am sitting and tired and walk with the music playing and I forget what I heard.” The group jumped in on this input so quickly that I honestly could not record their comments quickly enough. One general conclusion from the discussion that ensued was that they want others to have this kind of opportunity at least once a series. Participant 7 said, he thought small groups would benefit from going over the sermons in the their small groups. Throughout the rest of the group meetings, the members of the group kept coming back and making similar comments along this regard.

In the last week of the group meetings, in my final question, I asked, “What helped you the most from this sermon on Christlikeness?” Participant 1 said, “The sermons were helpful but meeting like this has helped me. Hearing other perspectives has helped my understanding.” Participant 5 said, “Getting together to discuss the sermons

helped me the most.” Participant 4 said, “The focus groups and hearing the different opinions from other people has helped me to understand the sermons better.” While the comments challenged some of the data from the PSQ and DCQ regarding the impact of the sermon series on beliefs, clearly the groups were the most helpful aspect in the process of understanding and life change.

The Importance of Credibility in Preaching

Homiletics and stories can only go so far. However, I had one more interesting discovery in relation with the use of illustrations. As mentioned, several of the group members highlighted that they liked my use of personal stories. The reason I highlight this finding again is that this discovery contributed to leading me toward a major finding. As noted above, Participant 1 mentioned how the story of my conversion lent credibility to the preaching. The entire group echoed this sentiment all at once. Participant 1 went on to say, “People are pretty good at spotting authenticity, and if the person is not authentic the people will not listen to the speaker.” Participant 3 said in a later discussion on this issue that people “see the televangelists on television asking for money and that creates doubt in people.” In the third sermon, when I shared my story of going deeper with the Lord in college, Participant 3 said, “It was good that you put yourself in that story. What he was preaching about actually happened to him.” The data indicates that a personal story from the life of the preacher adds credibility to the message.

The importance of credibility showed up in other forms during the focus group meetings. Credibility was very important for Participant 1. Later, he said, “Scripture adds credibility for the message. However, the critical issue is to find balance between

Scripture and application for everyday life.” He did not base credibility solely on the preacher and the stories. The pastor and the stories need biblical support as well.

Participant 7 brought up the importance of credibility in one more important area. He talked about the importance of seeing people lead Christlike lives:

I have been in church all my life and have seen Christlike living all my life. I have also watched my mom grow over a period of years and how godly and sweet she has become over the years. I have seen it in others and that is why I am still in church. Even though it can get nasty in church at times, I have this underlying sense that God is real.

The data shows that the lives of the pastor and people in the church must line up with Scripture in order for preaching to have credibility.

The Spiritual Nature of Preaching

Week four of the focus groups clearly yielded the most data from the participants. During the session, the discussion went into an unexpected but rewarding area that contributed in the discovery of a major finding. The discussion involved the use of the altar during the worship service. I planned for this sermon in the series to serve as the one where I would give a clear call and opportunity for surrender at the altar. The response was not what I had hoped and prayed for, so I brought the issue into the discussion at the focus group. The group mentioned many of the typical topics that come up when discussing altar calls. Participant 2 said, “Every time someone went to the altar when I was growing up, people thought they were going to be saved all over again.” Participant 6 said, “Some people make bad decisions and are afraid to make decisions and have to live up to them. So they are afraid to make the decision because they do not know if they can live it.” These responses are similar with other responses with others I have gotten before on the subject at this church. In other places, I have noticed more effectiveness

with this method, but at this church, I have not seen as much effect. The culture and personality of the people at the campus came into the discussion as well.

I was about to give up on the subject when Participant 6 finished her previous statement with these words: “If God does not put the desire in you, it is hard to get up and walk to the altar.” Participant 2 added this comment immediately in relation to this statement: “Last week you talked about how they may have physical symptoms,... your heart may beat faster,... relating that more information of this nature may help the people recognize how the Holy Spirit works in them.” Participant 4 said a little later, “It is hard to take the first step. When my sister-in-law was saved, she pulled me out of the pew and was practically running to the altar.” A little later Participant 6 said, “When the Holy Spirit acts, you cannot help but move. You do not think about what is happening around you. You just have to get up there.” Participant 4 immediately said, “That is what happened with my sister-in-law.” Participant 6 then said about her salvation experience, “I could not sit down for anything.” These comments clearly bring out the crucial role of the Holy Spirit in the work of God.

One other issue is important to highlight in relation with this topic. Participant 4 said later in the discussion, “Maybe the Holy Spirit is working on them, but it is not their time yet.” Participant 6 then said, “God is not convicting them yet.” Earlier in the discussion Participant 7 mentioned, “There is a waiting process. Sometimes we have to wait for God to show us that I can’t do this on my own.” Participant 4 said, “It all goes back to God’s timing and God’s will.” As a preacher, I knew all these factors, but these comments served as good reminder that preaching is a spiritual enterprise dependent on the role of the Holy Spirit throughout the whole process.

Summary of Major Findings

The data indicated that the sermon series did move people to develop a greater understanding of Christlikeness:

- Contextualized preaching did play some role in the changes that occurred in relation to beliefs and practices of Christlike living.
- The qualitative data indicated that rediscovering the Wesleyan middle way is very important for Nazarenes in this generation.
- The qualitative data demonstrated that sermon-based discussions and are effective ways to increase the impact of sermons in my current context.
- The lifestyle of the pastor and congregation are critical factors in lending credibility in preaching.
- Preaching is a spiritual enterprise through and through.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

I began this project because of shared frustration between pastor and congregation regarding growth in Christlikeness. The problem was not the desire for growth and change. Despite best efforts, people did not seem to be developing in their growth toward Christlikeness. Preaching is one of the major ways a pastor has available to influence people in this direction, but despite all the preaching, people do not sense they are making much progress.

The literature review in Chapter 2 laid out some of the challenges for Nazarenes specifically in this area. Many of the challenges are similar with those in other denominations and churches. Some of the issues, however, are unique. Chapter 2 revealed some ideas for recovering clear, powerful preaching on the subject of Christlikeness. I believe recovering the Wesleyan middle way, reimagining the mystery of salvation, reclaiming the role of missionary/pastor/preacher, and reclaiming a Wesleyan-holiness hermeneutic and *homiletical* metanarrative are some of the avenues for clarifying the call to embrace Christlikeness in Nazarene preaching. Additionally, recognizing the role of the Holy Spirit in preaching is critical to bringing people into the experience of Christlike living.

The data from the PSQ, DCQ, and the focus group showed development in understanding Christlikeness from a Wesleyan-Arminian Nazarene perspective. Specific focus group data showed some growth in Christlikeness in everyday living. The qualitative focus group data demonstrated that further group discussion in combination with sermons that engaged different *homiletical* practices influenced the group in this

regard. However, credibility of the pastor and the working of the Holy Spirit played the more significant roles in change in the areas of study.

Problem

Nazarenes in the mid- to late-twentieth century went through an identity crisis regarding their core doctrine. The phase may be a natural process in the development of an organization. However, beginning in the 1970s especially, the denomination lost a clear, coherent message of Christlikeness that served as the key doctrine and major force of growth up until that time. Some may argue the timing, but arguing against the current reality is harder to do. Debates over crisis and process, *substantial* and *relational* concepts of entire sanctification, and the constant winds of change in culture and church life have all contributed in some way to affect the current situation. The denomination even at this point today seems polarized around these issues.

The greatest negative effects of the current reality falls upon average Nazarenes who faithfully continue to worship, serve, and work in their local congregations. They are confused about what the Christlike life is and looks like. A lack of clarity in doctrine has led to lack of clarity in the pulpits. Lack of clarity in the pulpit has caused confusion and frustration for the people in the pews. For this reason, Nazarenes must recover a clear, coherent message of life change that results in Christlike living.

Purpose

The purpose of the research was to provide one means for evaluating changes in beliefs and practices of Christlike living in the twenty-first century for members and attendees at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene through the means of a sermon series presented over a period of six weeks. I attempted to

evaluate the changes based on a fresh approach to preaching Christlikeness in the twenty-first century from a clearly Wesleyan-Arminian perspective. The specific context for the study was my own congregation at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene.

Major Findings

The quantitative and qualitative data indicated that changes regarding Christlike beliefs and practices did occur during the project, especially among those in the focus groups. The DCQ results, as highlighted in chapter 4, showed significant movement in five of the practices of spiritual disciplines studied during the project, along with minor changes in all the areas of spiritual disciplines studied. The DCQ did not show much movement in beliefs after the sermon series. However, qualitative data from the focus groups did show movement and growth in these areas. The major findings all highlighted factors that seemed to help foster those changes.

The Importance of Contextualized Preaching

Contextualizing the message without falling into syncretism is the challenge of nearly every generation of preachers. In the current climate of rapid and constant change, the issue of contextualization is more pressing than ever before. I worked hard to find ways to contextualize the core doctrine of Nazarenes, and my efforts seemed to prove effective.

Personal observation. As a youth pastor, lead planter in two church plants, and pastor of one established church that needed a turnaround, I have always believed in the need for contextualization in ministry. I believe understanding the people I am trying to serve and reach is the first step in effective ministry, so I have always put a heavy

emphasis on this aspect of ministry. Therefore, I made great attempts during the preaching series to connect with the postmodern mind-set using different methods such as illustrations, stories, media, and object lessons. The focus groups did confirm that these approaches were effective for all of the participants. My use of personal illustrations and object lessons came up repeatedly in the discussion. At this level, this discovery served as a confirmed finding because I have seen the importance of this aspect of ministry in every venue I served over the past twenty-one years. However, after the series, even though this approach did influence the changes that occurred, I now believe I have overemphasized this aspect of ministry in the past. While important, other factors are much more important.

Literature review. In Chapter 2, I presented much research about this aspect of preaching. G. Johnston and Beville provide great research on preaching effectively in the postmodern context. Sweet's analogy regarding the transition from the age of Gutenberg into the Google age is especially helpful (177). The currency of information in the twenty-first century is no longer words but image. Preachers today need to become more familiar with poetry over prose. Principle-based, proposition preaching is not effective anymore. Metaphor, word pictures, stories, and object lessons are very helpful in the media-driven age of the twenty-first century. Perhaps this approach was never successful given the state of discipleship in most American churches. Preachers need to be aware of their surroundings and use methods that connect with the people they are trying to reach.

Beville does give a needed warning in this regard. He cautions his readers to be careful not to cross the line between adapting methods to reach culture into adopting their values (2). He believes that many churches in America have crossed this line. Preachers

have to be wary of crossing a very fine line in this regard. The temptation is to make cultural relevance the goal rather than the means. Avoiding this practice is crucial.

Mears and Bugg provide good research on these issues. Their research on the five needs of postmoderns can serve as a template for preachers as they seek to connect with this generation (341). Being sensitive to the needs of the people in the ministry context and showing how Jesus meets those needs will be helpful in the future.

Lastly, the section on recovering the role of missionary/pastor/preacher also gives helpful information in this regard. The Barna Groups says America has 120 million uncommitted people. This number equals the number of the twelfth largest nation in the world (Barna). Wesley and Bresee both modeled the role of missionary/pastor/preacher. They did not set out to create some new model of ministry. They simply found ways to serve and preach in the contexts in which they lived. Wesley preached in the fields in the framework of Methodism. Bresee served and preached among the poor in downtown Los Angeles in the new denomination that he formed. They did not stop at reaching new people. They found ways in their context to mentor and disciple the people they reached through their ministries. Pastors need to embrace this spirit today and find ways to fulfill the role of missionary/pastor preacher effectively in their context.

Biblical and theological framework. The Bible offers plenty of support for contextualization in preaching. Of course, the often-used verse from Paul gives support for this practice: “To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some (1 Cor. 9:22). Though some would argue how effective the approach was, Paul went out of his way to connect with the people in Athens. In Colossians 4:5 Paul says, “Be wise in the way you act toward

outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.” Jesus instructed his disciples to go only after “the lost sheep of Israel” in Matthew 10:6, indicating sensitivity toward different people groups. In line with this thought, Paul says in Galatians 2:7, “On the contrary, they recognized that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised.” Jesus, Peter, and Paul all recognized awareness regarding different people groups. Different contexts require different methods, but the message cannot change.

This last statement is very important to remember. Everyone quotes the statement, “Methods change, but the message stays the same.” However, the danger of crossing from contextualization into syncretism is very real. Paul, in Romans 1:16, reminds preachers that the power to save is ultimately in the gospel and not in the creative communication of the preacher. He also reminds preachers of the power of the cross in 1 Corinthians 1:18 when he says, “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” The gospel message carries an inherent power that man cannot duplicate or mimic. The preacher must preach the gospel in full faith of the power of the gospel to save and no faith in himself or herself to save. Paul gives a strong warning against syncretism in 2 Corinthians 4:2:

Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God.

Pastors-preachers must be very careful of this danger. Only the Holy Spirit can protect preachers from this trap completely. Many have crossed a line into marketing needs and preaching a gospel of self-fulfillment and satisfaction. A marketing approach in ministry makes preaching about the cross very difficult later. Contextualization helps the

missionaries/pastors/preachers know the best way to present Christ crucified in their context as the means of salvation through the death of the old self and reception of the forgiveness of sins and new birth.

Practice of ministry. As I noted earlier, I have always given attention to reaching people in contextual ways. However, I now see that I have given too much credence for this factor in preaching and ministry. I like the word *contextualization* much better than the phrase *cultural relevance* with which I have always been uncomfortable. This project renewed a sense of the mystery of salvation and power of the gospel to change lives. I am finding a greater freedom in preaching by relying on the Holy Spirit to bridge the gap between the message and spiritual results in the lives of the people.

Rediscover the Wesleyan Middle Way

The battle lines regarding entire sanctification over the past fifty years revolved largely around the issues of crisis and process and the substantive view of this doctrine as opposed to the relational one. As is often the case when two sides disagree, either/or positions were taken. However, Wesley the conjunctive theologian, preferred both/and solutions. Recovering his middle way can help Nazarene preachers today.

Personal observation. The research for this project cleared up a lot of confusion regarding the subject of entire sanctification for me. I was one of the people caught up in the misunderstanding of this message for a long time. I did not grow up Nazarene, so I did not have the luxury of hearing the message of entire sanctification until college. In some ways, this factor was a positive experience. However, after I graduated and started my first ministry assignment, I quickly became confused. I would one hear one preacher explain entire sanctification a certain way and then another one a completely different

way. Until this project, I did not have an awareness of the disputes between the *substantialists* and *relationalists* in the denomination. I knew of issues like crisis and process at this time, but I heard such different approaches regarding these concepts that I was confused about this teaching as well.

The data collected for this project helped me understand the source of my confusion and develop synthesis and balance on these issues. The information that interested me the most revealed how the current generation views the issue of crisis and process. I believe the findings indicate mixed views. If that is representative of this generation at large, balance will be critical in the years ahead. The project verified my hypothesis in Chapter 2 that rediscovering the Wesleyan middle way and making intentional efforts to emphasize both crisis and process is crucial.

Literature review. Chapter 2 has a whole section on the importance of rediscovering the Wesleyan middle way. One of Wesley's greatest strengths was his conjunctive abilities. He was able to hold the grand doctrines of free will and sovereignty, law and gospel, and crisis and process in great tension. This quote from Wesley speaks of the process regarding a person's entrance into the experience of entire sanctification:

A man may be dying for some time; yet he does not, properly speaking, die, till the instant the soul is separated from the body; and in that instant he lives the life of eternity. In like manner, he may be dying to sin for some time; yet he is not dead to sin, till sin is separated from his soul; and in that instant he lives the full life of love. (*Works* 11: 401-02)

This statement clearly demonstrates both crisis and process. Wesley, as always, used his conjunctive abilities to find balance and synthesis where others seek to force either/or choices. This ability to balance tension is crucial in today's context.

I believe Wesley's appreciation for the mystery of salvation, as outlined in Chapter 2, contributed in helping him balance issues such as this one. Interestingly, he

never records his moment of entire sanctification. Perhaps Wesley the pastor did not want people to use his experience as strict systematic process that others would have to follow. In addition, in his *Plain Account* he writes, “I believe no year has passed since that time wherein God has not wrought the same work in many others; but sometimes in one part of England or Ireland, sometimes in another——as ‘the wind bloweth where it listeth’” (*Works* 11: 491). He is very comfortable with mystery. His appreciation for experience also no doubt helped him appreciate the different experiences of those under his care.

The other issue that Nazarenes seem to polarize around that Wesley did not is on the *substantial* and *relational* approaches of entire sanctification. Repeatedly, Wesley defines the fruit of entire sanctification in relational terms of love. Wynkoop captures this emphasis well. However, like those who emphasized *eradication* and crisis before her, she overemphasized relationships and process.

Wesley was also comfortable with *substantial* language. In his sermon, “On Sin in Believers,” highlighted in the literature review, he says that an “infection of nature” remains in believers after they are born again. This language is very *substantial* in nature. Wesley is using metaphors at this point and Hahn does good research revealing the need to keep analogies like this alive. Lanham is helpful also, when she encourages preachers to be sure and take the time to explain these concepts in a way that today’s listeners can understand. Again, balance is the key. The need for cleansing of a self-centered bent toward life resulting in selfless love for God and others is still useful language today.

Biblical and theological framework. The Bible and systematic theology come together on the issue of the crisis of entire sanctification. Paul, addressing people who

were already Christians says, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship” (Rom. 12:1). Paul calls Christians to “offer your bodies a living sacrifice...” after they have already been born again. Romans 6:13 employs very similar language as Romans 12:1. Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, “May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” I agree with the hermeneutical approach of Middendorf on this verse as outlined in Chapter 2. I do not believe the only way to interpret this verse is as a text for entire sanctification. However, I do believe the Greek use of the aorist in this verse, in line with the experience of believers and tradition reaching back into the time of the early Church fathers, warrants this interpretation as one possible meaning of this verse.

Process is clearly taught in passages such as 2 Corinthians 3:18 and Philippians 2:12-13. Preachers can find plenty of preaching material for both crisis and process regarding the doctrine of entire sanctification. In the spirit of Christlike love, preachers can leave behind either/or propositions and preach the optimism of grace for a generation that so desperately needs to hear that message.

The Bible also clearly teaches the substance of entire sanctification. Jesus said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself’” (Matt. 22:37-40). Jesus was quoting Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, showing consistency throughout the entire Bible on this issue. Paul says

in Galatians 5:6, “The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.” John, the apostle of love, sums up the essence of love in 1 John 4:17-19:

This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: In this world we are like Jesus. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

These passages are only a small sampling of scriptures on love in the New Testament.

Clearly, Christlike love is the essence of holy living.

As far as cleansing from original sin, Scripture also lends credibility to the *substantive* nature of this doctrine. Wesley used verses such as John 1:7 and 1:9 as proof for a deeper cleansing from all “sin” and all “unrighteousness” (*Explanatory Notes* 631). Paul says in Ephesians 1:4, “For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.” Jesus himself says, “Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God” (Matt. 5:8). Scripture, tradition, experience, and reason provide the biblical and theological framework for the doctrine of a crisis cleansing from all sin that enables people to love God supremely and others sacrificially through the enablement of the Holy Spirit.

Practice of ministry. This project helped me greatly in two areas regarding this major finding. First, I will be careful to balance crisis and process. Today’s listeners are very educated. Society is too diverse to assume that people fit neatly within a certain compartment based on their age. I will be very careful to preach crisis and process whenever I address this topic in a sermon or series. Additionally, I need to give adequate attention regarding cleansing from sin, how a person experiences this cleansing, and how the only true fruit of this cleansing is a life of selfless love. The Wesleyan middle way, balanced by a respect for the mystery of salvation, will guide me in these critical areas.

Secondly, I will preach this doctrine more and with confidence because of this project. I have grown intellectually and spiritually due to the process of the research and writing. The project helped me to develop a clear, coherent understand and method for preaching this doctrine clearly. Additionally, I see the importance for this message now more than ever before. I believe every Nazarene needs to develop a Wesleyan-Arminian hermeneutical and *homiletical* metanarrative for their preaching ministry that breathes the reality of Christlikeness into every sermon.

Sermon-Based Discussions and Groups

Sermon-based discussion groups are not new. I have actually used them before. During the focus groups, however, I came to a firsthand realization of how helpful they can be in facilitating understanding and application of the sermon.

Personal observation. Sermon-based groups are a part of my ministry now and have been in the past, as well. Before this project, I used these types of groups because I read about them in books. Larry Osborne gives a good description of the advantages of these groups as well as some best practices for their use in churches. I have implemented those practices with some success at times in my ministry. However, partly because of resistance, I have not pressed the matter very forcefully. However, during this sermon series, and in the focus groups, I came to a deeper appreciation of these kinds of groups. Repeatedly, during the discussion groups, several members of the focus group mentioned how the discussions after the sermons helped them process and apply the information from the sermon. This project gave me a firsthand appreciation for this approach rather than simply a tool about which I read in a book.

Literature review. The literature support for this approach comes again from the section on reclaiming the role of missionary/preacher/pastor. Wesley and Bresee were very effective at preaching not only for decision but for discipleship as well. Bresee utilized methods that were effective in the nineteenth century in downtown Los Angeles, such as love feasts, revival campaigns, and Sunday morning and evening services.

Wesley, however, did a better job in this venture than perhaps anyone in history. He is quite famous for his willingness to stoop to preaching in the fields. No longer welcome in many Anglican churches of his day, he remained faithful in preaching the message of inner heart change, even in the fields. Whitefield showed him this new approach, and Wesley's ministry changed from that day forward. Additionally, England experienced revival for the rest of the century.

However, Wesley did not stop at this point, unlike Whitefield. Wesley has spiritual children today because of his extensive discipleship approach. The people he reached in the fields joined societies. The societies are comparable with small congregations today. Each member of a society had to join a class. Due to their similarity in size, many compare Wesley's classes with today's small group movement. However, Wesley probably would not recognize today's small groups in America. His groups tended to focus much more on radical accountability. Beyond the opportunities of societies and classes, Wesley offered the opportunities for bands. The bands usually involved a group of three people engaging in even deeper levels of accountability.

Though sermon-based discussion groups are not the same specimen as Wesley's classes, they are one adaptation of his approach of discipleship that can still work well. As groups continue to meet over time, they will become closer with one another. As the

groups get to know one another better over time, opportunities for accountability could open up organically.

Biblical and theological framework. Exodus 18 is the biblical basis upon which many people base their model for small groups. Moses was very tired carrying on all the work of the ministry on his own. His father-in-law Jethro came for a visit and advised him that he could not keep up that pace. He had to find people to help carry the heavy load of leadership for so many people. Jethro told him that what he was “doing is not good” (v. 17). He then gave him this advice:

But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you.. (vv. 21-22)

Many pastors today use this as a model for small groups. L. Osbore and Dale Galloway are the best-known examples of this kind of meta-cell approach based on sermons.

In the New Testament, Jesus had a group of twelve men who followed him as disciples and apostles. He ministered in large crowd settings but engaged in intensive discipleship with the twelve. Jesus modeled a large group ministry and small group-based discipleship method.

The book of Acts introduces a large group celebration and small group discipleship model. Acts 2:46-47 says, “Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.” These verses clearly demonstrate a large group celebration, small group discipleship model. Dale Galloway bases his whole book *20/20 Vision* on Acts 20:20: “You know that I have not hesitated to

preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house.” Paul taught the people publicly and in their homes. Clearly, the Bible gives plenty of precedent for small group based discipleship. Acts 20:20 seems to support the idea of sermon-based discussions. Jesus certainly took time to discuss his teachings with his group of twelve once the multitudes went home.

Practice of Ministry. As mentioned earlier, I have always had an affinity for sermon-based groups and even used them at times in my ministry. However, this project gave me firsthand evidence of their effectiveness. Two ideas came out of the focus group meetings. The first idea was the possibility of offering a lunch after church once every series for people who would like to discuss the current series in more detail. Second, Participant 7 is getting ready to start a new small group for younger married couples. I talked with him about performing a pilot test for a sermon-based group. After he is done with the pilot test, I will explore more ways to introduce these opportunities in the church at large.

The Credibility Factor

Credibility is essential in any profession. However, as a church leader, the credibility factor is tantamount for all successful ministry. This fact is especially true for the pastor as he or she preaches the gospel.

Personal observations. I would imagine every pastor could tell his or her own horror stories of the impact of a leader in their congregation or a staff member who falls and does damage for the cause of Christ. I have had my own horror stories. Of course, hardly a day goes by when a spiritual or civil leader does not fall from grace. I always

knew the impact of these tragedies. Therefore, the issues brought up in the focus group in this regard only served to strengthen my understanding of this issue.

The focus group brought up on many instances the importance of credibility. To be clear, we are certainly speaking of spiritual credibility. One's inner and personal relationship with God is the true anchor for any dimension of credibility. In the end, however, that inner spiritual credibility will have real time and space evidence. Real credibility is demonstrable.

Obviously, the pastor has to have credibility with the congregation. However, the importance of the credibility of members in the congregation came into the discussion as well. The people in each local congregation must demonstrate Christlike living if others are going to believe such a lifestyle is possible.

Literature Review. Kinlaw writes with much depth and discernment on these issues. I believe he is right when he says the only thing harder than the preparation of the message is the preparation of the preacher (17). I believe this statement sums up the importance of this issue as well as any other: "As I read the biblical biographies of mighty preachers, I'm convinced that ultimately there is no great preaching unless the preacher partakes of the divine nature in some measure" (18). Credibility is important in every occupation but the issue is more important for preachers than any other. A preacher who does not live what he or she is preaching will not have impact on the congregation for very long.

Montoya offers very practical guidance regarding the elements necessary for spiritual power in preaching. A sense of contrition, confession, constant communion, a sense of commission, and the consolation of the saints is critical for spiritual power in

preaching. The consolation of the saints is Montoya's way of emphasizing the need for the people in the congregation to pray for the pastor. These ingredients can work together to help a pastor maintain a holy heart and disposition that give spiritual power in preaching.

Connected with this issue is the nature of the of the pastor-shepherd role. Kinlaw also emphasizes the importance of this issue. He says, "Shared suffering is at the heart of pastoral ministry, as the pastor takes the burden of his people into his own life and thus helps to alleviate them" (37). A big part of credibility is the sense that the pastor cares for the people. Obviously, this aspect of ministry is more complicated the larger a church becomes. However, the Bible regularly emphasizes the shepherd concept for the pastor.

The CEO mind-set is largely detrimental among pastors today. The parishoners need to know that pastors care. CEOs do not typically get good grades for a high caring quotient. Certainly, pastors have to pay attention to issues of administration and business in ministry. However, pastors who find ways to connect with their people outside the pulpit will have greater credibility with them when in the pulpit.

Biblical and theological framework. Jesus definitely had credibility with the people he served and taught. Mark 1:22 says, "The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law." I believe the reason the people resonated with his teaching was his credibility. The reason he had credibility with the people was that he applied Scripture in a way that readily connected with their lives. He was able to teach this way because he lived among them. He was one of them. He was not afraid to be with the lowest of society. He was so much different from the religious leaders who only quoted rabbis and did not care about the

people. His lifestyle was open for everyone to see. His willingness to live among the people helped him develop compassion for the people. His compassionate nature and relevant teaching gave him credibility.

Jesus also fully embraced the role of shepherd. In John 10:10 he said, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” Jesus put the needs of his followers before his own needs. The people of his day were well aware of the sacrifices that shepherds made for their sheep. His willingness to identify with the lowest in society and put the needs of others before his own needs endeared the people for him.

Of course, Jesus is not the only one who employed the shepherd metaphor. In Ezekiel 34:2, God told Ezekiel to prophesy: “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Woe to you shepherds of Israel who only take care of yourselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock?’” A shepherd’s heart is critical for pastors today. Peter reminds pastors that they will give account of their responsibility one day:

Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. (1 Pet. 5:2-5)

Peter clearly calls the pastors under his leadership to be people of character and compassion. Character and caring are critical in the development of credibility for pastors with their people.

Practice of ministry. I have always made a strong emphasis on pastoral ministry in my ministry contexts. Sending cards, shaking hands, and talking with people before and after services and being with them in times of celebration and crisis are some of the

ways I have tried to fulfill this role in ministry. The discussions in the groups served as a reminder of the importance of this aspect of ministry.

Character development is an ongoing quest for the pastor. The pastor who wants a congregation to pursue Christlikeness must also pursue Christlikeness. I found Montoya's advice on spiritual power very helpful in this regard. I will continue to give this area priority in my life.

One area I found lacking in my ministry is what Montoya calls the "consolation of the saints" (36). He believes in the need for the congregation to pray for the pastor. This area is weak in my current context, and I intend to gather some men at the church around me to help me strengthen this area in 2015.

Preaching as a Spiritual Enterprise

Preaching is a spiritual enterprise through and through. I wish I could say I always remember this fact. Today, with all the tools and helps available on the internet, unfortunately, I have found that I can get wrapped up in the wrong things in regard to preaching sermons. The research in this project was a very good reminder of the spiritual nature of preaching.

Personal observation. I have believed in the spiritual nature of preaching my entire ministry. However, I believe my experience in church planting, combined with my own natural leanings, unconsciously led me to emphasize techniques over spiritual issues at times. I do not like the phrase *cultural relevance* as some apply the phrase today. Also, I believe the Apostle Paul would not agree with the way some people use him to justify some preaching practices today. This project as with other issues, helped clarify and give new confidence in the role of the spiritual elements of preaching. Pastors need tools.

Contextualization is important. However, preaching the gospel in the power of the Spirit is the key to changing lives.

Literature review. The findings in Chapter 4 verified the importance of the preacher's spiritual preparation. Kinlaw's works proved very helpful in reminding me of the essential element of the Holy Spirit in preaching. The fourth focus group meeting revealed the importance of the Holy Spirit in the event of preaching. The preacher cannot produce lasting spiritual results apart from the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Chambers also highlights the importance of the role of the Holy Spirit in the preaching event for producing spiritual results, as outlined in Chapter 2. Kinlaw's law of the second witness, or the Holy Spirit, is a helpful reminder for today's preacher to rely completely on the Holy Spirit in preaching.

The section on the preparation of the preacher in Chapter 2 also highlights the nature of spiritual warfare in the preaching event. Paul speaks of spiritual warfare eloquently in Ephesians 6:12-18. The real battle is in the unseen realm. Preachers cannot overcome in these areas in their own strength. They all need supernatural help and thankfully the Lord provided the necessary help through the assistance of the Holy Spirit and also through prayer.

Bounds writes as eloquently on prayer as anyone ever has. He writes as if he was writing today on the need of preachers to incorporate prayer into every aspect of their lives. Today's pastor needs to take advantage of the two helps that God provided for every preacher. No lasting, spiritual benefit will come about from any ministry without the Holy Spirit and prayer. The findings verified the importance of the role of the Holy Spirit and prayer as outlined in Chapter 2.

Biblical and theological framework. Paul's words on the power of preaching from Romans 1:16 and 1 Corinthians 1:18 apply here as well. The Lord needs men and women who are willing to preach the gospel, as Paul writes about in Romans 10:14-15. The gospel has an inherent, life-changing power. The great need of the day is Spirit-filled preachers who will preach the gospel.

Peter, the one who denied Jesus, preached in downtown Jerusalem where Jesus faced his execution. After Pentecost, the coward bravely proclaimed Jesus in the earshot of the people who killed him. Three thousand people came to the Lord in one hearing. Paul, despite great spiritual opposition, led three missionary journeys preaching the gospel and starting churches. The Bible is full of examples of what can happen when Spirit-filled men and women preach the gospel with full confidence in the inherent power of the gospel.

Practice of ministry. I found great help from Montoya and his writing on the six requirements for spiritual power. He specifically mentions how preachers try to cover up for spiritual dryness with the different media tools of the day. Though these elements can help, they are nothing apart from the Holy Spirit. I will give greater attention to deepening my spiritual walk with the Lord in the days ahead.

Interestingly, I am finding new freedom in preaching these days as I wrap up this project. The findings lined out in this section helped me greatly the last few times I preached. Additionally, I am noticing more fruit at the altar after preaching, and people are committing in deeper ways more freely than they have since I started my ministry at Darby Creek. I am also experiencing a new level of fulfillment in ministry that does not

rely on the artificial standards of success that I used to think were important. The Holy Spirit truly does work in marvelous ways.

Implications for the Findings

I started this project out of a desire to help my congregation understand the concepts regarding Christlike living. I did not want to stop at this point, however. My goal was for life change. The PSQ and DCQ monitored changes regarding Christlike beliefs and practices through the means of a sermon series, entitled God's Grand Design for Your Life. These tools only provided quantitative measurements. Those types of measurements were helpful and did indicate growth in the area of practices related with Christlike living. Areas of belief did not indicate movement in these tools as much. However, once I got into the focus groups, I did observe growth in the areas of beliefs as well. I achieved the aim of the project by measuring these changes using the quantitative and qualitative tools.

However, research question #3 opened another area of exploration. The focus groups enabled me to take another step and investigate what elements, if any, of the preaching helped facilitate those changes using the recommendations of my professors in my class that began my dissertation process. I have outlined many of the lessons learned in Chapters 4 and 5. This research influenced me in several ways both personally and professionally as a pastor.

Personally speaking, I have a deeper understanding of Christlikeness from a Nazarene perspective than I have ever had before. This factor influenced me personally in a spiritual way for the good. As highlighted in the major findings, credibility is a very important factor for preachers in every area of life and preaching. As I have grown in

understanding and spiritual maturity, I am noticing more freedom and effectiveness in preaching. I have always placed a strong emphasis on personal spiritual disciplines in my life. However, the research on the means of grace expanded my understanding and opened up new avenues to explore in this vital area. Healthy pastors produce spiritual congregations in most cases. I anticipate much spiritual fruit personally and as a pastor because of this study.

Pastorally speaking, I will give more attention in the development of a preaching plan that embraces fully a homiletic metanarrative of Christlikeness, or holiness. By this statement I mean, Wesley's rubric of the analogy of faith and the order of salvation will guide my preaching schedule. Doughty's emphasis on Wesley's three types of sermons in Chapter 2 will also serve as rubric for my preaching schedule. Doughty says Wesley based his preaching on one of three topics: the fundamentals of theology, such as the *ordo salutis*; *speculative* theology, including topics such as the Trinity, and, miscellaneous subjects covering various elements of holiness teaching (84). Rooting my preaching in these topics and anchored by the analogy of faith will help keep the homiletic metanarrative I now believe is critical for a well-balanced plan of preaching.

In my preaching on entire sanctification specifically, I will be sure to walk the Wesleyan middle way. Society is too diverse today to assume an entire segment of people all fit into one frame of reference. I will seek to learn and employ Wesley's conjunctive abilities in the years ahead for my ministry.

I also learned that people could benefit from sermons in more than one way. The focus group opened my eyes in a firsthand way regarding the value of sermon-based discussion groups. I am going to seek ways to utilize sermon-based discussion groups as

part of my overall discipleship strategy. Additionally, I am going to look for opportunities to interact with people regarding my sermons. Offering a time of discussion over lunch once during a series is one good way to implement this idea. I believe firmly in the power of preaching, however, I do see the value of allowing people to discuss the sermons together. Others can learn from what others and experienced through the preaching experience.

Second, regarding preaching, I have a new awareness of the limitations of techniques and technology in preaching. They are tools that the pastor can use, but they will not produce spiritual growth by themselves. In my previous paragraph, I did not mean to discount the importance and power of preaching at all. I believe preaching is an event in time with a specific purpose. The people are together for a specific purpose in the name of Jesus. The Spirit-filled preacher in tune with God's purpose can be God's instrument at that moment to facilitate new spiritual life and fruit. Preachers need to focus much more on the role of the Holy Spirit in their lives and ministry. God's servants do not work for God. They work with him. As Jesus could do nothing apart from the Father, today's servants can do nothing apart from him. I was aware of the spiritual factor in preaching, but my work in this project made this factor a fundamental conviction in my life. Preachers cannot afford to take the help of the Holy Spirit for granted. I need God the Father to anoint my preaching with his Spirit for the sake of Christ, so Christ can glorify the Father with spiritual fruit cultivated by the Holy Spirit. This truth will be the primary lens through which I view preaching for the rest of my ministry.

Limitations of the Study

One way to strengthen this study would be to lengthen the time between the sermon series and the DCQ that the congregation filled out after the last sermon. The participants did not have much time to think through the series or to put more of the practices regarding Christlike living into practice. Secondly, most people do not attend church six weeks in a row now. Thankfully, in my context people are more conscientious about this practice than others are. However, this factor in combination with the fact that the series ended on a holiday weekend (a factor over which I had no control), made data collection a little more difficult. I did make adjustments that curtailed the effect of this limitation, but sporadic church attendance was an issue I could not alleviate completely. Last, I believe the results were less demonstrative since I could only use one focus group. People forget most of what they hear after one week, so I am sure this factor influenced the PSQ and DCQ data collection. The results may have demonstrated more change with more people having the opportunity to participate in a group. However, performing focus groups with the whole church was not possible.

Unexpected Observations

A couple of the unexpected findings were major findings of the project. Though I was familiar with sermon-based discussion groups before this project, I will now find ways to implement them at a much greater level before. I could not believe how often this subject came into the discussion weeks 4, 5, and 6 of the focus group meetings. The second surprise major finding was the varying views on crisis and process, as I highlighted many times in Chapters 4 and 5.

Another surprise finding related specifically to the Southwest campus. In the last session of the focus group meetings, a wide-ranging discussion developed regarding the

need for more balance regarding outreach and meeting the needs of the people in the congregation. Interestingly, that week I preached on outreach. One of the people in the group is considering starting a ministry in this area in the days ahead. I was not aware of this need before that meeting.

Last, I am pleased with how much I learned from this project. The research greatly deepened my understanding of Christlikeness. The focus groups gave me an entirely new perspective on preaching as I engaged in conversation with my congregation regarding the sermons. The data collection and analysis, though tedious at times, will guide my preaching for the second half of my ministry. This was a pleasant surprise.

Recommendations

I would like to see research, or have the possibility to do research, on a project like this one, using a pilot small group that is not part of a sermon series setting as was the case with this study. In a way, I unknowingly did that in this project. However, since I was not doing research from this perspective from the beginning, I did not go into the project with that set of lenses. I firmly believe preaching a series on this subject would produce greater change if everyone in the church met in groups to study the subject together during the series. I intend to do a series again on this subject and implement this idea for Southwest, and maybe all of Darby Creek, in the future. In general, sermon-based discussion groups can be a helpful tool for preachers in the area of discipleship.

Postscript

Two years ago, I sat in my dissertation preparation class having no idea what I was getting myself into with this project. Along the way, I have felt like I am climbing a very tall mountain. Each chapter represented a different peak I had to climb with new

vistas based on my new vantage point. The statement of problem and purpose led me into a great deal of research that now serves as a foundation of knowledge regarding the beliefs and practices of Christlike living, along with perspectives on preaching to help me be more effective in leading my congregation on the journey of Christlikeness. Chapter 3 gave me the methodology for examining these issues. Chapter 4 was very exciting as I analyzed the changes that occurred in the course of the sermon series. From this vantage point, I began to think about some new ways to preach more effectively through the help of the Holy Spirit. Chapter 5 was like the peak of a mountain from where I could begin to think about how to apply these practices in the years ahead of my ministry. I am not sure I would have started climbing this mountain if I knew how tall the mountain was at the beginning. However, with the journey ending, I have found the journey one well worth taking.

APPENDIX A

SERMONS FOR THE INTERVENTION

God's Grand Design for Your Life- Part One

Discovering The New You

2 Corinthians 5:14 - 6:3

I. Introduction: Society's Obsession With Extreme Makeovers

II. Examples of Spiritual Extreme Makeovers

A. Carlos: From drugs to preacher

B. The Apostle Paul

C. Personal Story

III. The DNA of a New Creation

A. New Birth (2 Cor. 5:17).

B. Justified (2 Cor. 5:21)

C. Sanctification (2 Cor. 5:17)

IV. The New Possibilities of our new DNA

A. A New Purpose: Christlikeness (2 Cor. 5:15)

B. A New Perspective (2 Cor. 5:16)

1. Carlos

2. The Apostle Paul

3. Personal Story

V. The New You: A pen made out of water bottles: God can remake people for new purposes.

God's Grand Grand Design for Your Life- Part Two

Unleashing Your Spiritual DNA- Part One

1 John 1:7-2:11

I. Introduction: Broken GPSs and Compasses

II. Fixing the Fall in Fallen Humans

A. Christlikeness (1 John. 2:1-11)

1. A New True North: Christlikeness (1 John. 2:6)

2. A New Spiritual DNA: Christlikeness replaces self-centeredness.

B. Counterfeit Christlikeness

1. Claim #1: We know God (1 John. 2:3-5)

2. Claim #2: We live in God (1 John 2:5-6)

3. Claim #3: We are in the light (1 John. 2:8-10)

C. Christlikeness: A life of selfless love for others

1. Illustration: Are you Jesus?

2. Pressure Cookers and Crockpots

D. Christlikeness is not the way to Christ; Christ is the way to Christlikeness.

III. Conclusion

A. A New True North

B. Giving up control of our lives to Jesus

VI. Response: Invitation to the Deeper Life

God's Grand Design for Your Life- Part Three

Unleashing Your Spiritual DNA- Part Two

1 John 1:7 – 2:3; 3:4-6

I. Sloshing Our Sins: Object lesson with a glass of water

Does the water spill because the glass shook or because the water is in the glass?

II. The DNA of Sin

A. Acts of Sin (1 John.1:7; 2:1-2; 3:4-6)

B. Original Sin (1 John. 1:7; Ps. 51:5)

III. The Necessity for a Cure

A. The guilt and power of acts of sin need to be forgiven and broken.

B. The present of sin needs cleansing.

IV. Original Sin and Me

A. Paul (Rom. 7:14-17)

B. Despicable Me

V. The Remedy for the Sin Sickness

A. The Blood of Jesus (1 John. 1:7)

B. Dr. Brantley and Ebola

VI. Response for the Deeper Life

God's Grand Design for Your Life- Part Four

Unleashing Your Spiritual DNA- Part Three

1 John 2:12-14

- I. Introduction: Marriage and the Christian Life
- II. The Path of Maturity (1 John 2:12-14)
 - A. John's Order of Salvation Analogy
 - 1. Children
 - 2. Young Men
 - 3. Fathers
 - B. John's Concept of Perfect Love (1 John 4:15-18)
- III. The Deeper Christian life
 - A. Samuel Brengle
 - B. Shirley Dobson: The Human Side of the Deeper Christian Life
- IV. Balancing Moments of Surrender and Growth
- V. Response: Full Surrender
 - A. Recognize the deeper need for surrender
 - B. Complete surrender
 - C. Receive God's cleansing by faith

God's Grand Design for Your Life- Part Five

Cooperating With Your New DNA- Part One

Philippians 2:12-13

- I. Introduction: Roger's New Family
- II. Means of Grace
 - A. Two Time-Tested Means of grace (Phil. 2:12-13)
 - 1. Prayer
 - 2. Scripture
 - B. Personal Practice
- III. Spiritual Disciplines and the Christian Life
 - A. Spiritual growth is not automatic.
 - B. People are saved by grace, but grace works.
- IV. The Mark of Spiritual Maturity: Love (1 John 4:17-19)
- V. Closing Illustration: Real Love in Action
- VI. Response: Altar Call

God's Grand Design for Your Life- Part Six

Cooperating With Your New Spiritual DNA- Part Two

Micah 6:8; Acts 1:8

I. Nothing Wasted: Robert Morrison

II. Embrace the DNA of A World Changer (Mic. 6:8)

A. Micah 6:8

1. Justice
2. Humility
3. Mercy
4. Live out Micah 6:8

B. Embrace the call to work for social justice.

1. Poverty
2. Child Sponsorship
3. Human Trafficking
4. Hispanic Ministry

C. Embrace the Call to Reach Your World (Acts 1:8)

1. Adopt Your Neighborhood
2. Naz Kidz
3. Bus Ministry
4. Foxlair Mobile Home Ministry

III. Conclusion

A. Nothing Wasted: Robert Morrison

IV. Response: Corporate Commitment

APPENDIX B**PRESERIES QUESTIONNAIRE (PSQ)**

Name: _____

Date: _____

Gender: _____ (Optional)

Age: _____ (Optional)

Phone Number: _____ (Optional)

INSTRUCTIONS: This Preseries Questionnaire (PSQ) and the Discerning Changes Questionnaire (DCQ) will help Steve Suttles measure beliefs and practices regarding entire sanctification (Christlikeness) at the Southwest campus before and after an upcoming series entitled, “God’s Grand Design For Your Life”. Supplying a name is necessary for guaranteeing the effectiveness of the results given on these tools. Please be honest in answering these questions. All questionnaires will be confidential. Thank you for participating in this project!

Share your opinions in these areas based on the following scale.

Opinion	Rating
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
No Opinion	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
God created me in his image.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what the Bible means by stating that people are created in	1	2	3	4	5

the image of God.

Opinion	Rating
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
No Opinion	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
Capacity for relationship with God is the essence of what it means to bear the image of God.	1	2	3	4	5
Bearing the image of God is equivalent with Christlikeness.	1	2	3	4	5
God has a unique purpose for every human being.	1	2	3	4	5
It is impossible for humans to reflect the image of God.	1	2	3	4	5
I am aware of God's purpose for my life.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the concept of original sin.	1	2	3	4	5
Interacting in love with others is the essence of what it means to bear the image of God.	1	2	3	4	5
Bearing the image of God carries ecological responsibility on the part of humanity.	1	2	3	4	5
All humans are born in sin.	1	2	3	4	5
Adam's and Eve's sin corrupts all people.	1	2	3	4	5
Humans apart from God are self-centered.	1	2	3	4	5
Natural disasters are attributable to Adam and Eve's first sin.	1	2	3	4	5
Sin is any intentional or unintentional deviation from God's perfect standard.	1	2	3	4	5
Original sin is different from an act of sin.	1	2	3	4	5

Opinion	Rating
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
No Opinion	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
Adam's and Eve's sin is the root cause of relational problems today.	1	2	3	4	5
Sin is a willful violation of a known law of God.	1	2	3	4	5
I was born with a selfish, fearful, and controlling nature that desperately needs transformation by the grace of God.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a strong understanding of what happened to me when I was saved.	1	2	3	4	5
Christians can live a life of victory from sin.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the doctrine of justification.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe the person I used to be died when I was born again.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what it means to be born again.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what sanctification means.	1	2	3	4	5
I can live a Christlike life.	1	2	3	4	5
Original sin still exists in the life of the Christian.	1	2	3	4	5
Christlikeness means loving God with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength and loving my neighbor as myself.	1	2	3	4	5
Christians can live a life of perfect love.	1	2	3	4	5
I am familiar with the phrase <i>entire sanctification</i> .	1	2	3	4	5
Christians can be entirely sanctified.	1	2	3	4	5

Opinion	Rating
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
No Opinion	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
Christians can experience a cleansing of original sin in this life.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe in a crisis moment of sanctification that cleanses the heart completely of original sin.	1	2	3	4	5
Original sin is the self struggling to rule where only Christ deserves to rule.	1	2	3	4	5
All believers will have to live with original sin until they get to heaven.	1	2	3	4	5
I will be just like Jesus when I am in heaven.	1	2	3	4	5

**Share your opinions in these areas
based on the following scale:**

Opinion	Rating
Never	1
Occasionally	2
Quite Often	3
Always	4

	Never 1	Occasionally 2	Quite Often 3	Always 4
I communicate with God on a daily basis through prayer.	1	2	3	4
I commit myself daily to God and his purposes as an ongoing expression of my total surrender to him.	1	2	3	4
I set aside time to pray every day.	1	2	3	4
I pray regularly throughout the course of the day for God's guidance and help to serve him in my different activities.	1	2	3	4
I am following a plan to read and study the Bible on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4
I memorize and meditate on Scripture.	1	2	3	4
I get together with a small group of Christians regularly for the purpose of spiritual growth.	1	2	3	4
I confess when I fall short of God's standard for my life.	1	2	3	4
I spend time interacting with God in a way consistent with how he has created me.	1	2	3	4
The practice of Communion draws me closer to God.	1	2	3	4
I take time to prepare myself for Communion through reflection, confession, celebration, and recommitment of my life to God.	1	2	3	4
I get involved in social issues such as illegal immigration and sex trafficking as one way to live out the image of God.	1	2	3	4
I get involved in helping those less fortunate than myself.	1	2	3	4

**Share your opinions in these areas
based on the following scale:**

Opinion	Rating
Never	1
Occasionally	2
Quite Often	3
Always	4

	Never 1	Occasionally 2	Quite Often 3	Always 4
I get involved in with environmental issues as a way of living out the image of God in my life.	1	2	3	4
I look for opportunities to share the gospel with my family and friends on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4
I pray regularly for my unsaved family and friends to be saved.	1	2	3	4
I regularly try to have spiritual conversations with people who do not know the Lord.	1	2	3	4
I seek to reach people for Christ through active ministry at the Southwest campus.	1	2	3	4
I invite people to attend church with me.	1	2	3	4
I find ways to be involved in world missions.	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX C**DISCERNING CHANGES QUESTIONNAIRE (DCQ)**

Name: _____

Date: _____

Gender: _____ (Optional)

Age: _____ (Optional)

Phone Number: _____ (Optional)

INSTRUCTIONS: This Discerning Changes Questionnaire (DCQ) and the previous Preseries Questionnaire (PSQ) will help Steve Suttles measure beliefs and practices regarding entire sanctification (Christlikeness) at the Southwest campus before and after the series entitled, God's Grand Design for Your Life. Supplying a name is necessary for guaranteeing the effectiveness of the results given on these tools. Please be honest in answering these questions. All questionnaires will be confidential. Thank you for participating in this project!

Share your opinions in these areas based on the following scale.

Opinion	Rating
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
No Opinion	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
God created me in his image.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what the Bible means by stating that people are created in the image of God.	1	2	3	4	5

Opinion	Rating
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
No Opinion	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
Capacity for relationship with God is the essence of what it means to bear the image of God.	1	2	3	4	5
Bearing the image of God is equivalent with Christlikeness.	1	2	3	4	5
God has a unique purpose for every human being.	1	2	3	4	5
It is impossible for humans to reflect the image of God.	1	2	3	4	5
I am aware of God's purpose for my life.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the concept of original sin.	1	2	3	4	5
Interacting in love with others is the essence of what it means to bear the image of God.	1	2	3	4	5
Bearing the image of God carries ecological responsibility on the part of humanity.	1	2	3	4	5
All humans are born in sin.	1	2	3	4	5
Adam's and Eve's sin corrupts all people.	1	2	3	4	5
Humans apart from God are self-centered.	1	2	3	4	5
Natural disasters are attributable to Adam and Eve's first sin.	1	2	3	4	5
Sin is any intentional or unintentional deviation from God's perfect standard.	1	2	3	4	5
Original sin is different from an act of sin.	1	2	3	4	5

Opinion	Rating
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
No Opinion	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
Adam's and Eve's sin is the root cause of relational problems today.	1	2	3	4	5
Sin is a willful violation of a known law of God.	1	2	3	4	5
I was born with a selfish, fearful, and controlling nature that desperately needs transformation by the grace of God.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a strong understanding of what happened to me when I was saved.	1	2	3	4	5
Christians can live a life of victory from sin.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand the doctrine of justification.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe the person I used to be died when I was born again.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what it means to be born again.	1	2	3	4	5
I understand what sanctification means.	1	2	3	4	5
I can live a Christlike life.	1	2	3	4	5
Original sin still exists in the life of the Christian.	1	2	3	4	5
Christlikeness means loving God with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength and loving my neighbor as myself.	1	2	3	4	5
Christians can live a life of perfect love.	1	2	3	4	5
I am familiar with the phrase <i>entire sanctification</i> .	1	2	3	4	5
Christians can be entirely sanctified.	1	2	3	4	5

Opinion	Rating
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
No Opinion	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	No Opinion 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
Christians can experience a cleansing of original sin in this life.	1	2	3	4	5
I believe in a crisis moment of sanctification that cleanses the heart completely of original sin.	1	2	3	4	5
Original sin is the self struggling to rule where only Christ deserves to rule.	1	2	3	4	5
All believers will have to live with original sin until they get to heaven.	1	2	3	4	5
I will be just like Jesus when I am in heaven.	1	2	3	4	5

**Share your opinions in these areas
based on the following scale:**

Opinion	Rating
Never	1
Occasionally	2
Quite Often	3
Always	4

	Never 1	Occasionally 2	Quite Often 3	Always 4
I communicate with God on a daily basis through prayer.	1	2	3	4
I commit myself daily to God and his purposes as an ongoing expression of my total surrender to him.	1	2	3	4
I set aside time to pray every day.	1	2	3	4
I pray regularly throughout the course of the day for God's guidance and help to serve him in my different activities.	1	2	3	4
I am following a plan to read and study the Bible on a regular basis.	1	2	3	4
I memorize and meditate on Scripture.	1	2	3	4
I get together with a small group of Christians regularly for the purpose of spiritual growth.	1	2	3	4
I confess when I fall short of God's standard for my life.	1	2	3	4
I spend time interacting with God in a way consistent with how he has created me.	1	2	3	4
The practice of Communion draws me closer to God.	1	2	3	4
I take time to prepare myself for Communion through reflection, confession, celebration, and recommitment of my life to God.	1	2	3	4
I get involved in social issues such as illegal immigration and sex trafficking as one way to live out the image of God.	1	2	3	4
I get involved in helping those less fortunate than myself.	1	2	3	4

**Share your opinions in these areas
based on the following scale:**

Opinion	Rating
Never	1
Occasionally	2
Quite Often	3
Always	4

	Never 1	Occasionally 2	Quite Often 3	Always 4
I get involved in with environmental issues as a way of living out the image of God in my life.	1	2	3	4
I look for opportunities to share the gospel with my family and friends on a regular basis	1	2	3	4
I pray regularly for my unsaved family and friends to be saved.	1	2	3	4
I regularly try to have spiritual conversations with people who do not know the Lord.	1	2	3	4
I seek to reach people for Christ through active ministry at the Southwest campus.	1	2	3	4
I invite people to attend church with me.	1	2	3	4
I find ways to be involved in world missions.	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX D

DISCERNING BEST PRACTICES FOCUS GROUP (DBPFG)

Sermon One Focus Group: Discovering the New You

Introduction: I opened the group by expressing my appreciation for the group members' participation in the focus group. After expressing my appreciation, I explained the process and purpose of the group meeting for the next six weeks. The group members also received and signed the informed consent forms at this time.

I also gave special attention regarding the use of a digital recorder during the meetings. I stressed the importance of accurate information for the project and that the digital recorder would help facilitate reliable information. The group members received assurances of complete confidentiality for everything discussed in the group.

Starter Conversation: Do you like to watch Extreme Makeover shows? Why do you think these shows are so popular?

Question 1: Were you aware of all the changes Christ made in you when you became a Christian?

I reviewed the changes that the sermon highlighted.

Question 2: Which one of these changes were you least aware of before the sermon?

Question 3: How would you describe or define these changes now?

At this time, I reviewed several of the new possibilities in the life of the new believer that I covered in the sermon.

Question 4: Which one of these new possibilities were you not aware of but are now as a result of the sermon?

Question 5: Did this sermon help you understand the concept better? If so, what element of the sermon helped in this regard?

Closing Question: Would anyone like to add anything at all regarding these topics of discussion?

Sermon Two: Unleashing Your Spiritual DNA—Part One

Introduction: I spent a few minutes reviewing the process, purpose, and ground rules for the group before starting the second focus group.

Starter Conversation: What is your favorite movie about Jesus? Which one do you think gives the best depiction of what Jesus was really like?

Question 1: Before today's sermon, did you have any concept of original sin? Did you learn anything new about original sin today? If so, what did you learn?

Question 2: Did this sermon help you understand the concept better? If so, what element of the sermon helped in this regard?

Question 3: Prior to the message today, were you familiar with the idea that Christlikeness is God's purpose for every Christian? What are your thoughts on this now that you have heard the sermon?

Question 4: Did you believe a Christlike lifestyle was possible before you heard today's message? If not, do you now? What makes you think it is possible now?

Question 5: Did you understand that love is the essence of Christlikeness before the sermon today? Do you now? Why or why not?

Question 6: Did this sermon help you understand the concept better? If so, what element of the sermon helped in this regard?

Closing Question: Would anyone like to add anything at all regarding these topics of discussion?

Session 3: Unleashing Your Spiritual DNA—Part Two

Starter Conversation: Do you ever feel like you get stuck in the Christian life? If so, share with the group on that a little bit.

Question 1: What did you learn about sin today?

Question 2: What elements of the sermon were helpful in understanding the concept and reality of sin?

Question 3: Before the message, were you aware of the impact of original sin on your life as a Christian? How did your understanding change today? What elements of the sermon helped in this regard?

Question 4: Do you believe cleansing from all sin is possible? Were you aware of this before the message? What elements of the sermon helped and/or hindered this awareness?

Question 5: What is your understanding of how God can deal with sin in the life of the believer? What did God do? What do Christians have to do? What elements of the sermon helped you understand these ideas better?

Question 6: How many of you heard these concepts for the first time today? Do you have a proper understanding now? What elements of the message helped in this regard?

Closing Question: Would anyone like to add anything at all regarding these topics of discussion?

Sermon 4: Unleashing Your Spiritual DNA——Part 3

Starter Conversation: What do you think of the bumper sticker that says, “I’m not perfect; just forgiven”?

Question 1: Today, the sermon brought up the idea of a later crisis of self-surrender following the moment of salvation? Was this idea a new one for anyone? Do you agree or disagree with this idea? Why or why not?

Question 2: Would anyone be willing to summarize what they think I meant by a later moment?

Question 3: What elements of the message today helped you understand this concept better?

Question 4: What does sanctification mean for you now after hearing several different messages on the subject? Do you understand this concept better because of the series?

Question 5: Did the illustration about Samuel Brengle help you understand the instantaneous nature of sanctification better? If so, what was helpful? If not, why?

Question 6: Is sanctification instantaneous or a process? Which aspect do you most easily connect at this point of the series?

Question 7: Have the illustrations and object lessons been helpful? Did I keep a good balance between Scripture, illustration, and application today and in the rest of the series?

Closing Question: Would anyone like to add anything at all related regarding the topic that no one else mentioned up to this point?

Sermon 5: Cooperating with Your New Spiritual DNA—Part One

Starter Conversation: What is your favorite Bible story?

Question 1: Before the sermon, were you aware that God expects Christians to cooperate with him in deepening our relationship with him?

Question 2: Did today's sermon help you know how to cooperate with God's work in your life?

Question 3: Were you familiar with the concept of the means of grace before this sermon? Did today's message help you understand how the means of grace can help you grow in your Christian life?

Question 4: Do you connect with spiritual disciplines or means of grace better? If so, why?

Question 5: What changes, if any, do you plan to make in the areas of prayer and Bible study because of today's message?

Question 6: What do you believe is the essence of Christlike living because of today's message or series?

Question 7: Did this sermon help you understand these concepts better? If so, what element of the sermon helped in this regard?

Closing Question: Would anyone like to add anything else at all related to the topic today?

Sermon 6: Cooperating with Your New Spiritual DNA—Part Two

Introduction: I took special time to share my appreciation with the participants in this group, since this meeting was the last one. I also explained the purpose of the group again and explained how their time given for this project will help the kingdom and make me more effective as a pastor and preacher.

Starter Conversation: What are some you of doing to help people during the holidays?

Question 1: Did this sermon help you understand that Christlikeness involves positive, active engagement in the world? If so, what helped the most? If not, what could have been more helpful?

Question 2: Are any of you more likely to get involved making a difference in areas of human trafficking, poverty, witnessing, or taking care of the planet? If so, in what ways do you plan to get involved in these areas?

Question 3: Did this sermon help you understand these concepts better? If so, what element of the sermon helped in this regard?

Closing Question: Would anyone like to add anything at all related to the topic that we have not discussed yet?

APPENDIX E

Means and Standard Deviations of Pre- and Post-Test DQQ Individual Item Scores

(n = 27).

	Pretest	Posttest	t (df)
	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	
BELIEF STATEMENTS			
1 God created me in His image.	4.92 (0.28)	4.96 (0.20)	-1.00 (24)
2 I understand what the Bible means by stating that people are created in the image of God.	4.77 (0.51)	4.81 (0.40)	-0.33 (25)
3 - Capacity for relationship with God is the essence of what it means to bear the image of God.	4.40 (1.08)	4.68 (0.56)	-1.66 (24)
4 Bearing the image of God is equivalent with Christlikeness.	4.19 (1.23)	4.62 (0.75)	-1.52 (25)
5 God has a unique purpose for every human being.	4.96 (0.19)	4.89 (0.32)	1.00 (26)
6 It is impossible for humans to reflect the image of God.	2.16 (1.63)	2.16 (1.18)	0.00 (24)
7 I am aware of God's purpose for my life.	3.81 (1.04)	3.93 (0.92)	-0.62 (26)
8 - I understand the concept of original sin.	4.56 (0.64)	4.63 (0.49)	-0.70 (26)
9 Interacting in love with others is the essence of what it means to bear the image of God.	4.42 (0.95)	4.54 (0.51)	-0.72 (25)
10 Bearing the image of God carries responsibility on the part of humanity.	4.15 (0.82)	3.96 (0.59)	1.22 (26)
11 All humans are born in sin.	4.78 (0.64)	4.82 (0.40)	-0.27 (26)
12 Adam's and Eve's sin corrupts all people.	4.63 (0.88)	4.74 (0.45)	-0.68 (26)
13 - Humans apart from God are self-centered.	4.42 (0.86)	4.62 (0.64)	-1.31 (25)
14 Natural disasters are attributable to Adam and Eve's first sin.	3.58 (1.17)	4.04 (0.96)	-2.00 (25)
15 - Sin is any intentional or unintentional deviation from God's perfect standard.	4.52 (0.59)	4.56 (0.58)	-0.44 (24)
16 - Original sin is different from an act of sin.	3.38 (1.27)	3.81 (1.27)	-1.58 (25)
17 Adam's and Eve's sin is the root cause of relational problems today.	3.96 (1.06)	4.32 (0.85)	-2.09 (24)*

18 - Sin is a willful violation of a known law of God.	4.42 (0.99)	4.77 (0.43)	-1.74 (25)
19 I was born with a selfish, fearful, and controlling nature that desperately needs transformation by the grace of God.	4.72 (0.46)	4.76 (0.44)	-0.44 (24)
20 - I have a strong understanding of what happened to me when I was saved.	4.54 (0.51)	4.65 (0.49)	-1.36 (25)
21 Christians can live a life of victory from sin.	4.15 (1.13)	4.52 (0.58)	-1.68 (26)
22 - I understand the doctrine of justification.	4.24 (0.88)	4.36 (0.81)	-1.14 (24)
23 I believe the person I used to be died when I was born again.	4.59 (0.57)	4.59 (0.50)	0.00 (26)
24 I understand what it means to be born again.	4.74 (0.45)	4.59 (0.50)	2.13 (26)*
25 I understand what sanctification means.	4.52 (0.87)	4.48 (0.71)	0.33 (24)
26 I can live a Christlike life.	4.56 (0.75)	4.56 (0.51)	0.00 (26)
27 Original sin still exists in the life of the Christian.	3.92 (1.22)	3.88 (1.27)	0.14 (24)
28 - Christlikeness means loving God with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength and loving my neighbor as myself.	4.78 (0.42)	4.85 (0.36)	-0.70 (26)
29 Christians can live a life of perfect love.	3.80 (1.16)	4.08 (0.81)	-1.43 (24)
30 I am familiar with the phrase <i>entire sanctification</i> .	3.92 (1.44)	4.48 (0.65)	-2.35 (24)*
31 Christians can be entirely sanctified.	4.08 (1.00)	4.44 (0.77)	-1.89 (24)
32 - Christians can experience a cleansing of original sin in this life.	4.38 (0.80)	4.19 (0.90)	1.15 (25)
33 I believe in a crisis moment of sanctification that cleanses the heart completely of original sin.	3.83 (1.07)	3.74 (0.96)	0.49 (22)
34 - Original sin is the self struggling to rule where only Christ deserves to rule.	4.00 (0.95)	4.30 (0.78)	-1.37 (22)
35 All believers will have to live with original sin until they get to heaven.	3.22 (1.38)	3.52 (1.24)	-0.98 (22)
36 I will be just like Jesus when I am in heaven.	3.42 (1.36)	3.62 (1.27)	-1.22 (25)
BEHAVIOR STATEMENTS			
37 - I communicate with God on a daily basis through prayer.	3.37 (0.74)	3.56 (0.64)	-1.99 (26)
38 I commit myself daily to God and his purposes as an	3.19 (0.74)	3.44 (0.64)	-2.27 (26)*

ongoing expression of my total surrender to him.

39	I set aside time to pray every day.	3.00 (0.78)	3.22 (0.75)	-1.44 (26)
40	I pray regularly throughout the course of the day for God's guidance and help to serve him in my different activities.	3.22 (0.80)	3.44 (0.70)	-2.00 (26)
41	- I am following a plan to read and study the Bible on a regular basis.	2.67 (0.88)	2.85 (0.95)	-1.22 (26)
42	- I memorize and meditate on Scripture.	2.30 (0.61)	2.44 (0.65)	-1.69 (26)
43	I get together with a small group of Christians regularly for the purpose of spiritual growth.	2.96 (1.09)	3.15 (0.91)	-1.22 (26)
44	I confess when I fall short of God's standard for my life.	3.11 (0.70)	3.52 (0.64)	-3.70 (26)**
45	I spend time interacting with God in a way consistent with how he has created me.	2.78 (0.74)	3.04 (0.71)	-1.82 (22)
46	- The practice of Communion draws me closer to God.	3.15 (0.91)	3.56 (0.70)	-3.05 (26)*
47	I take time to prepare myself for Communion through reflection, confession, celebration, and recommitment of my life to God.	3.04 (0.92)	3.27 (0.92)	-2.00 (25)
48	- I get involved in social issues such as illegal immigration and sex trafficking as one way to live out the image of God.	2.08 (1.19)	1.88 (0.78)	1.41 (24)
49	I get involved in helping those less fortunate than myself.	2.74 (0.90)	2.74 (0.94)	0.00 (26)
50	- I get involved in with environmental issues as a way of living out the image of God in my life.	2.00 (0.96)	1.88 (0.67)	0.59 (24)
51	- I look for opportunities to share the gospel with my family and friends on a regular basis	2.78 (0.60)	2.74 (0.86)	0.33 (26)
52	I pray regularly for my unsaved family and friends to be saved.	3.15 (0.86)	3.22 (0.80)	-0.70 (26)
53	I regularly try to have spiritual conversations with people who do not know the Lord.	2.41 (0.84)	2.48 (0.89)	-0.70 (26)
54	I seek to reach people for Christ through active ministry at the Southwest campus.	2.46 (0.95)	2.73 (0.87)	-2.06 (25)*
55	I invite people to attend church with me.	2.56 (0.85)	2.59 (0.80)	-0.44 (26)
56	- I find ways to be involved in world missions.	2.04 (1.09)	2.33 (0.99)	-2.13 (26)*

* $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .001$

APPENDIX F

INFORMED CONSENT FOR FOCUS GROUPS

Introduction: My name is Steve Suttles, and I am a student at Asbury Theological Seminary conducting a project for the fulfillment of a DMIN at Asbury Theological Seminary. You may contact me at any time if you have any questions or concerns about these groups.

Purpose: The purpose of the research was to provide one means for evaluating changes in beliefs and practices of Christlike living in the twenty-first century for members and attendees at the Southwest campus of the Darby Creek Church of the Nazarene through the means of a sermon series presented over a period of six weeks.

Procedure: Having filled out the questionnaires before and after the series, I selected you to participate in this focus group because you demonstrated noticeable changes in your beliefs and practices regarding Christlike living as a result of the sermon series. I have several questions based on the sermons that you will be able to answer in order to assess what elements of the preaching helped facilitate those changes.

Time Required: The focus groups will last 1½ hours. We will probably have to meet two times in order to gather the necessary information.

Voluntary Participation: Your participation in the study is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you may still refuse to answer any question you do not wish to answer. You may also withdraw from the group at any time.

Risks: There are no known risks associated with these focus groups. Please feel free to be honest in answering questions.

Benefits: While there are no known benefits associated with this process, you will learn more about your faith development because of your participation in this group. In addition, you may develop new friendships with the people in this group.

Confidentiality: Your name will be confidential in all of the reporting and/or writing related to this study. I will be the only person who sees the notes or hears the audio recordings of from the focus groups. I will destroy all records once the project is over.

Sharing the Results: I will share the results of this study with my mentor. Additionally, my proposal and defense team will see the results of this study. Lastly, my dissertation will lay out the results of these focus groups. Dissertations are available for use by many other people, so other people doing research in this area, or who simply have an interest in this area, may read the dissertation. However, no names will appear in any of these contexts.

Before you sign: By signing below, you are agreeing to allow me to audio tape you in these focus groups. Please be sure you have all questions answered to your satisfaction. If you agree to participate in this study, you will receive a copy of this document.

Participant Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print name: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Print name: _____

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